THE GODLY MANS CHOICE,

COMPARED
With the Natural Mans
DESIRE,
AND
Found to be tranſcendently the Beſt.
WHEREIN
Both are Characterized by their
DESIRES and DELIGHTS;
And this clearly evinced,
That the Godly Man is the only happy Man even in this World.
Being the Subſtance of XIII. Sermons upon *Pſalme* 4th. *Verſ.* 6, 7, 8.

By *Anthony Burgeſſe*.

LONDON,
Printed by *Abraham Miller* for *Thomas Underhill* at the Signe of the Anchor and Bible in *Pauls* Church-yard, M.DC.LIX.

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Found to be Incomparably the Beſt.

Preached from *Pſalme* 4th. *Verſ.* 6, 7, 8.
and now publiſhed.

By *Anthony Burgeſſe* Paſtour of the Church of *Sutton-Coldfield.*

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By Anthony Burgesse Pastour of the Church
of Sarron Colasfield.

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TO THE READER.

THe Pſalms are noted to have this peculiar Excellency in them, that they are the experimental breathings of a gracious heart, exerciſed under various temptations; ſo that what is doctrinally, and in the Idea delivered in other places of the Scripture, is here practically, and in Subjecto, viſibly expreſſed: ſo that none can underſtand them, unleſs he bring the ſame ſpirit with him, that breathed in David, while he compoſed them. This is Davids ſpiritual Harp, driving away all the evil and malignant affections, that may at any times riſe up in us. That Poetical one of Orpheus, though ſaid to tame Beaſts, is not comparable to this. Now as face anſwereth face, ſo doth the heart of a godly man anſwer Davids in his reſpective agonies of his ſoul; when grace worketh, when corruption worketh, he doth obſerve by the like tranſactions in his own ſoul. Among other particulars, I have ſelected this 4th Pſalm in the three laſt verſes to diſcourſe upon, becauſe therein is declared, what is the choice of a natural man, what is his ſummum bonum, and what of a godly man, wherein I am more large; ſo

that an heavenly heart, and the enjoyment of the light of Gods countenance is chiefly the Subject of this Treatiſe; ſublime and high matter comparatively to our dull, lumpiſh and heavy hearts. For this end doth God many times exerciſe his people with ſad temptations, that they may experimentally ſay, Gods loving kindneſs is better than life. *For* Job *and many others have lived, yet deſired* death. *The damned in Hell live, yet annihilation would be welcome to them. So that he only liveth, who enjoyeth the favour of God. As for the greateſt worldly pleaſures, they are but like the fancies of diſtracted men. So that as ſome who have perſwaded themſelves in ſuch pleaſing delights, and apprehending themſelves maſters of ſuch great revenews, when cured of this* delirium *by Phyſicians, have been diſpleaſed thereat, ſaying, they never enjoyed a better time, then under thoſe deluded imaginations. Such a folly and dream doth poſſeſſe all natural men, while deſtitute of the light of Gods countenance, they are unwilling to be awakened out of this dream, and to be cured of this folly. But with* David, *we call upon thee,* to taſte and ſee how good God is, *and then thou wilt cry out with* Auſtin, Sero te amavi Domine, *even mourn, becauſe thou waſt not acquainted with him any ſooner. And that thou mayeſt be quickned up hereunto, be diligent in meditating of theſe holy* Pſalms, *wherein is contained* flamnigera Theologia, *for hereby thou wilt find thy ſelf as it were in* Eliahs *fiery Chariot carried up to Heaven,*

March 18. 1658. ANTHONY BURGESSE.

THE NATURAL MANS CHOICE:

SHEWING

That no unregenerate Man can aſcend any higher in his *Choice* and *Deſires*, then the Creature.

Pſalm 4. 6.

There be many that ſay, Who will ſhew us any good?

THe Divine Pſalmiſt, at the ſecond Verſe, doth in a pathetical manner, reprove all his ungodly Enemies, who were alſo Enemies to God and his Church, as well as to him; and his Reproof is full of Reaſonings. As

1. That all the earthly good and advantage they ſeek after, is a *vanity*, it's *a lye*: They will never find it to be that to them which they *expect*: They are but a *ſhadow*, which is *nigrum nihil*, a black nothing.

2. Their attempts againſt the godly, will be fruſtrated, for God ſetteth apart the godly man for himſelf: This is his *Treaſure*, this is his *Apple of his eye*, which he will certainly defend. Thereupon he exhorts them to Repentance, which is accompliſhed, by *communing with their own hearts on their beds*. They are to take the ſolemneſt and moſt ſerious time to conſider of their waies; for all their wickedneſſe was committed for want of *conſideration*. *Intellectus cogitabundus, is principium omnis boni, Oh conſider this ye that forget God!*

This *Repentance* preſuppoſed, he *preſſeth* two *Duties.*

1. To *offer the Sacrifices of righteouſneſſe*; To be diligent in the Worſhip and Ordinances of God: and that with an holy and godly cleanſing of their lives from all impiety.

2. To *put their truſt in the Lord.* Even *Bellarmine* on this place, confeſſeth this is added, *That they might not preſume in their own Works, or in their beſt religious performances, but muſt reſt their ſouls wholly on the grace of God in Chriſt.*

Now the Pſalmiſt, having given this ſpiritual counſell, he informeth us of *two different diſpoſitions*, or two ſorts of men: For although there be various Interpretations and conjectures about the place, yet I pitch on that as moſt genuine.

The firſt is, *The Natural and Carnal diſpoſition which is in the ſpirit of every unregenerate man*; *Who will ſhew us any good?* They diſpiſe the counſell given; they think that theſe religious duties, are for no good at all; therefore they maniſeſt their *deſires* after ſome terrene and worldly happineſſe.

Secondly, *There is the Character of a gracious and regenerate man*; *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* Thus this text, like *Rebecca's* Womb, hath a prophane *Eſau*, who eſteemed a morſell of meat above his Birthright, and a holy *Jacob* ſtriving within it.

I ſhall begin with the firſt, wherein you have repreſented, *What is the heart-wiſh, and ſouls deſire of every man, till ſanctified*; even to go no higher, then to have happineſſe in the enjoyment of ſome creature, and not God himſelf. So that in the former part, you may obſerve,

1. The *number* of thoſe who have this diſtempered palate, *many*; even every man, till by Regeneration, he is enabled to *ſet his affections on things above.*

2. *Their ardent affection, They ſay*; that is, both internally, in their affections and deſires, as the fool ſaid, *There is no God*; and alſo with the tongue externally, manifeſting this corrupt heart within.

3. There is the *object* which their whole *heart* is carried out unto, *To ſhew us any good*; that is, any good or content of the creature: For, it's ſpoken oppoſitely to God, as appeareth by the words following. They do, as it were, deſire the Devils offer, which he made to Chriſt, *That the glory of the world might be ſhewed them*; and they will worſhip the Devil, and commit any ſinne, that they might enjoy it. And although it's true, that the things of this world are but a *ſhew*, the Devil doth but *ſhew* the worlds glory; yet to *ſhew* here, is to give to enjoy; to make them to partake of it. As *Pſal.* 60. 3. *Thou haſt ſhewed thy people hard things*: which was the making of them to drink the Wine of aſtoniſhment. Even as to ſee Heaven, to ſee death, is to partake of them. Obſerve,

That no Natural or Unregenerate Man, can lift up his heart any higher, then unto a worldly Happineſſe and content in the Creature.

When you have in the moſt powerfull and moving manner, diſcovered ſpiritual duties, and the neceſſity of Converſion to God, yet they matter it not; they will ſay, *Who will ſhew us any good?* That as it is with the Swine, though Pearles and precious Flowers be thrown unto her, yet ſhe trampleth them under

under her feet, and desireth her draffe, and the loathsome mire; so it is with them.

To bring this coal of fire into your bosome, let us consider several Propositions.

The general *Character* of the *godly* and the *wicked.*

First, *That herein lyeth the general Character of those two Citizens which* Austin *speaks of, one who builds up* Babylon, *and the other who builds up* Jerusalem. That the one doth *frui utendis*, and *uti fruendis*, but the other is clean contrary. The whole world consists of two sorts of men, the one who are *of* the world, the other, though in the world, yet not of it. As *John* 17. Believers are said to be *given* to Christ, *out* of the world. As a man may be in *England*, who is not yet an English-man; he cannot speak the language, he cannot conform to the custom and manners of the Nation. Thus it is here; the godly, they are indeed in the world, and are of it also in respect of natural propagation, but not by divine Regeneration. As the Fowles, though at first God created them out of the waters, yet they fly up into the Heavens, and delight to be soaring in the air. Thus it is with the Regenerate man; he is now made a new creature, *old things are past away*, and his *affections are set upon things above*: This earth is turned into fire. But the wicked man, he like our body of the earth, is earthly; even his very soul is in a spiritual sense so, and their love to the creature, is the predominant quality, and so like a stone he falls into this center. Now *Austin* of old, did fully expresse the contrary inclination of these two: That the wicked man doth *frui utendis*; that is, he doth enjoy as his utmost end, and terminateth his appetite in such things as his utmost happinesse, which only he is to use as meanes to a further end. As if the *Israelite* should have made the Wilderneſse instead of the Land of *Canaan* to him. This is the crooked and perverse inclination of the soul, wholly contrary to that Image of God, which man was made in. So that the very Heathens could observe, that though God made man with a countenance *calumque tueri*, yet they cried out, *O curvæ in terris animæ & cælestium inanes*: The body is upright, but the soul is bowed down, like the bodies of beasts, like wormes and Serpents that crawle on the ground. And therefore the wicked are the Serpents seed, not only because of enmity to the godly, but because they lick up, and live upon the dust of the earth, even upon earthly things. Every wicked man, he makes some creature or other to be as a God, and so the ultimate end to him.

To clear the hainousnesse of this wretched temper, consider

All good the creature affords, should lead us to God the universal good.

Secondly, *That all the good things, which the creatures do afford unto us, they are but as meanes to carry us to a further end.* They are but as the rounds of the Ladder, not to stand upon, but thereby to ascend higher, even to Heaven. So that as the world is a Glasse, to represent the invisible Attributes of God, his Wisdome, Goodnesse, and Power; thus all the comforts we can have by any creature, they are to be as so many *mementoes* that there is a better and more universal good, and that we have the creatures to use only, not to enjoy. Thus the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 7. *They that buy, as if they bought not; they that use the world, as not abusing it.* Some expound *abuti*, as it is sometimes taken for *valde uti*: but howsoever, he abuseth it, that doth not use it, as if he *used it not*, with an holy weaned affection from it. Hence then, to enjoy any creature, setting it in Gods room, in the heart, is a direct breach of that first Commandement, *Thou shalt have no other gods besides me.* And for this reason, *covetousnesse* is called *Idolatry*, Col. 3 5. Insomuch, that every natural man, hath one thing or other, on which he commits Idolatry, and therefore doth as highly offend God, as he that worships stocks and stones, giving divine adoration to them. The Scripture cals that, *The abominable thing.* Thus it is, when the heart of a man is fastned upon any creature, as the ultimate scope and end of

his deſires; we may ſay to him, Oh do not this *abominable* thing! Yea, this Idolatry is more dangerous, by how much it is the more ſecret and hidden in the heart. And as the Papiſts have invented a world of ſubtile diſtinctions to make their Idolatry lawfull, no leſſe ſubtile is the heart of man in this ſoul Idolatry.

Thirdly, *Take notice that there is an higher and groſſer ſort of unregenerate men, then happily this expreſſion will comprehend, and that is thoſe, who make ſuch things as are formally and expreſsly evil, the good things they would have ſhewed to them.* Such are all groſſe and prophane ſinners, who live in the daily practice of ſome loathſome ſinne: Theſe are a degree higher in wickedneſſe then thoſe in my text, (though they may be reduced to them;) for here the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks of ſuch things as are lawfull and good in themſelves. Honours, Wealth, humane greatneſſe, comfortable Relations, theſe are good things in themſelves; and to ſay, Who will ſhew us them? in a mortifyed and ſubordinate manner to God, had been no ſin: But when they come in competition with Gods favour, they had rather have them then Gods *light of his countenance*, this demonſtrateth impiety. But as for the prophane man, his appetite is more corrupted, for he cals evil things good; he loveth thoſe things exceſſively, which he is not to love at all. The other loveth Honey, but he eateth too much of it, and that kils him; this eateth Poyſon, and feedeth of that, one drop whereof is immediately mortal. But to theſe, I ſhall not enlarge my ſelf.

Fourthly, Conſider this, *That the Schoolmen do well place in every ſinne, a two-fold reſpect*; There is the *Averſion* from God, and the *Converſion* to the creature. For ſeeing the ſoul cannot like the earth, hang upon nothing, but it muſt have ſome Object or other to ſatiate it ſelf with, if it hath not God, it hath the creature: Now, as ſoon as ever it turneth to the creature, it turneth its back upon God. I ſpeak of the ſinfulneſſe of man in this reſpect, that he turneth to the creature too much, leaving God. Now as there is this in our corruption, ſo in our Converſion or Regeneration, there is the clean contrary; there is averſion from the creature, and converſion to God. It doth not only make a man caſt away his ſinnes, but alſo all creatures, ſo farre as they hinder the love of God; *for now they are riſen with Chriſt.* And as if a worm ſhould be made a man, it would no more crawle and creep on the ground; thus when a divine Nature, or a Nature from above, is beſtowed upon us. Not only love to ſinne, but love to Father, Mother, or life it ſelf, is inconſiſtent with the grace of God in our hearts, when it's exceſſive.

All naturally deſire felicity.

Fifthly, *It is acknowledged by all, that there is imbred in a man, an appetite or deſire after felicity and happineſſe.* This *Ariſtotle* and others, do abundantly confirm. Man by nature, hath ſuch a capacious heart, and the ſouls appetite is ſo vaſt, that it's more then the *Horſeleech*, or the *Grave*, that ſayeth alwaies, *Give.* The ſoul hath a *Sheoll*, that is alwaies asking, and never ſatisfyed. Now then, if there were a good regulated deſire after this *ultimate good*, where and in whom it was, this were to be encouraged. If the meaning of theſe in my text, had been, Who will ſhew us that which is indeed the chiefeſt and moſt reall good? they might have been encouraged, like thoſe that asked *what they ſhould do to be ſaved.* But though there be in the generall, an inclination to ſuch a bleſſedneſſe, yet wofull and dreadfull is the miſapprehenſion and blindneſſe of all men naturally about it; ſo that miſtaking the main end for which they came into the world, it's no wonder if at laſt they fall into the pit irrecoverably. There were above an hundred Opinions amongſt the Heathens, in *what* true *Felicity* did conſiſt; but though ſome were not ſo groſſe as others, yet all come ſhort of the true end: *That knowing of the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent, in the knowledg of whom is eternal*

ternal life. Neither are many Chriſtians much better then the Heathens in this reſpect: for although they know that God is the *chiefeſt good, in the enjoying of whom, through Chriſt, is only bleſſedneſſe*; yet practically, in reſpect of their hearts and lives, ſome place their happineſſe in *Riches*, ſome in *Honours*, and ſome in *Pleaſures*; and theſe to whom *David* ſpeaks here, that did love *vanity*, that cryed out for *earthly comforts*: they were not Heathens deſtitute of the knowledge of the true God, but ſuch who lived in the Church of *Iſrael*; only they were deſtitute of the *ſanctifying power of God within*. There is then acknowledged in all men, ſome innate appetite, whereby they would have a full and chief good, which might compleatly ſatiate and fill the ſoul.

Sixthly, *The perſwaſion of what is the beſt good, and which is chiefly to be deſired, is wounderfully diverſifyed, according to the ſeveral inclinations, humours, and conditions of men.* So that ſome place it in one thing, and ſome in another: One ſaith, Give me this good, there is none like that; Another ſaith, Give me that good, there is none like that. So that theſe many in the text, do not all deſire the ſame; yea, one matters not that, which another would go through fire and water to obtain. The *voluptuous* man, he doth not matter wealth or riches, let him enjoy his pleaſures, and he envyeth no rich worldlings; the *earthly worldly* man, he matters not honour and credit, let him get riches, and he regards not a good Name. *Populus me ſibilat, at mihi plaudo.* The Apoſtle is thought to bring all that an earthly heart can deſire, into theſe three heads, 1 *Joh.*2.15,16,17. For ſpeaking there terribly againſt the diſpoſition of theſe in my text, that *they ſhould not love the World*, he brings an Argument from the contraries, *The love of the Father cannot be in ſuch an one*; They can be no more together, then *Dagon* and the *Ark*: The hand filled with *dirt* and *ſtones*, cannot at the *ſame time*, be filled with *precious Pearles*: *He that is joyned to the Lord, is one ſpirit with him*; and he that is joyned to the *earth*, is made *earth* with it. *Si terram amas terra es*, ſaid *Auſtin*. And hereupon the Apoſtle giveth ſome examples and inſtances of the things of this world, that are like *Jaels* milk to *Siſera*, fairly inticing, but afterwards mortally wounding: and although ſome think there is not an exact and full partition, yet others do judge ſo. And by the *luſt of the fleſh*, they underſtand, all pleaſures and delights; by the *luſt of the eye*, all earthly and covetous deſires, as *Achan* ſaw the *Babyloniſh garment*, and *wedge* of *gold*, which made him ſinfully covet it; and the *pride of life*, that is, all ambition, all proud and high deſires after the great things of this world.

The perſwaſion of what is the beſt good, and which is chiefly to be deſired, is wonderfully diverſifyed according to the ſeveral inclinations, humours, and conditions of men.

Hæc tria pro trino nomine mundus habet.

This is the worlds *Trinity*, and there is no man inordinately addicted to any creature comfort, but it may be comprehended under one of theſe three heads. Now when the Apoſtle had given us an Inſtance of theſe things, he giveth another Argument againſt immoderacy after them; *This World paſſeth away.* They will *rot* in the *grave*, when holineſſe will *abide for ever.*

Seventhly, *That the preferring of the creature above God, though it be the ſinne of all man-kind, and as large as Original ſinne it ſelf, yet like that, it is hardly diſcerned and diſcovered.* It's almoſt unperceivable, unleſſe we are enlightned by Gods Spirit, when we ſet up the creature above him. It's true, there is a groſſe manifeſt and palpable way, which is ſeen in every covetous and ambitious, or luſtfull man: theſe do ſo plainly make either their belly their god, or their gold their god, or their preferment their god, that all men can eaſily condemn them for it; becauſe what is in their heart, empties it ſelf into foul and ſhamefull practiſes. But then there is the *mentall*, and ſoul deifying of the creatures, when the heart is ſecretly ſtolen away, and doth inſenſibly depend on, or exceſſively love ſuch a thing; and this is hardly to be diſcerned.

How hardly this ſin is diſcerned, untill a man be enlightned by Gods Spirit.

No

No doubt, but the *third kind of hearers*, and ſo *Demas*, were farre from thinking that they loved the world more then God. So that as the nature and operations of the ſoul are in their *Phyſical* conſideration little known, much leſſe in their *Theological*. Now although the tendencies of the ſoul may be various and multiforme, ſome to one Object, ſome to another, yet *ſelf* is that great *Diana*, *ſelf* is the *Belzebub*; all things in Religion, even God himſelf, is referred to *ſelf*, till a man be ſanctified. So that the heart being herein thus deſperately deceitfull, we are often and *often to commune with our own ſelves*, whether *ſelf* be renounced, whether *ſelf* be ſubordinated to God; whether we can ſay as *Mephibeſheth* to *David*, *Let Ziba take all, ſo that the King be ſafe.* Thus let honours, creatures, ſelf and all periſh, ſo that God and Chriſt be exalted. Every man, even he that ſeemeth to be the beſt, hath cauſe to ſearch, whether he be yet above creatures, as well as ſinne.

The Demonſtrations of this Truth, that no man Unregenerate, can aſcend any higher, then to ſome earthly content and Happineſſe.

All have loſt the Image of God, which alone did elevate the ſoul.

And firſt, *This will palpably evidence it, that every man by nature, hath loſt the Image of God, which only did elevate man, and made him qualified for the enjoyment of God, as his ſuitable Object. God made man after his Image*, which was *righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe*: ſo that as he made a woman like man, for man to delight in, ſo man was made like God, to delight in him. Then *Adam* deſired no other good but God: While he continued, he was above the creatures in his affection, as well as in dominion. He that had power given him to rule over all creatures, could alſo rule over all his affections. He did not overlove any creature, or delight in it, but ſubordinately to God. Oh glorious and bleſſed eſtate! But now we have loſt all this; this Image is defaced: Now *Sampſon* hath loſt his hair: Now the Bird is deprived of her wings: Now we are not able to lift up our hearts to him. Hence is that expreſſion of *Jehoſhaphat*, 2 Chron. 17.6. *His heart was lift up in the waies of the Lord.* You ſee even a regenerate man, hath much adoe to raiſe up his dull, frozen, and earthly heart, to enjoy God in Chriſt. He doth, like the Artificer, that with ſome Engine, and great drawing, gets a peice of timber up to the top of that Houſe he is a building, ſuch heaving, and pulling, and tugging, is a godly man forced to uſe, to get his heart up to God. An unregenerate man then, who hath nothing of this Image of God repaired in him, no wonder if he hath an heart like *Nabal's*, even a very ſtone, that ſinketh down heavily within him. This loſſe of Gods Image, is that which beateth downward, and makes the earth to ſwallow us up, as it did *Dathan* and *Abiram*. As the body deprived of the ſoul, preſently falls flat to the ground, and there it lyeth; thus doth every man deſtitute of Gods Image.

And Original corruption is come in the room of it.

Secondly, *This Image of God being thus loſt, in the room thereof, ſucceeds Original pollution*: For this light, cometh an univerſal darkneſſe and confuſion. Now this native pollution, that is a depravation of the whole power, and all the faculties of the ſoul, puts the ſoul off its hinges; it takes off the Charriot Wheeles: It makes man love, where he ſhould hate; reſt where he ſhould move: It makes *Princes go on foot, and Servants ride.* In a word, the ſoul is now turned upſide down. God the Object, whom he ſhould with all

all his ſoul and might delight in, now he loveth not at all; and what he is allowed to love in meaſure, and ſubordination, that he doth over-love. So that who ſo doth duely conſider, what diſorder and confuſſion Original ſinne hath put the heart into, he will ſee it cannot be, that God ſhould be duely honoured and eſteemed by a natural man. This curious Watch is now broken all in pieces. And as you ſee, a Paralitical hand is weak and quaking, not able to faſten upon any thing, ſo is now the ſoul of man towards God. Inſomuch, that *Ambroſe* complained of it, as our great miſery, that (*Cor noſtrum non eſt in noſtrâ poteſtate*) our heart is not in our own power, but is carried hither and thither, up and down, as the force of original corruption doth drive it. How abominable then are thoſe Doctrines that *advance the power of nature?* Some determining, that a man is able by nature to love God above all things, and that it's as eaſie to do things in reference to God, as the creature. *If* (ſaith *Molina*, no mean Jeſuit) *I have power to throw my money into the Sea, why cannot I as well give it to a poor man, out of love to God.* Such preſumptuous Doctrines as theſe, ariſe from the ignorance of that horrible confuſſion and diſorder which is now upon all by nature.

If the godly man is yet conflicting with this ſinne, then it muſt needs reign in an unregenerate man.

Thirdly, *If a godly man, though regenerated, and partaking of the Divine Nature, do yet grapple and conflict with this ſinne, of creature affection above God, then certainly an unregenerate man is over-maſtered with it.* For this we may conclude on, that what all the regenerate men are combating with, that is victorious and predominant over all natural men. It's true, the regenerate men differ in their fightings and conflicts; ſome do find it a greater difficulty to looſe and wean their affections from one thing more then from another; and ſo the natural man, one is more eaſily captivated to one earthly good then another: yet in the general; As there is no unſanctifyed man, but one creature or other reigneth or ruleth in his heart; ſo there is no godly man, but ſomething or other it is, that he can hardly mortifie, ſome ſecret and ſubtile motions of ſoul he hath. So that did not grace check and withſtand that creature, that object would damn him at laſt. If *Eve*, though in a ſtate of Integrity, could be tempted by an object alluring ſenſe, how eaſily then may we be enſnared? You read, when our Saviour ſpake that amazing ſentence, *That a Cammel might as well go through the eye of a needle, as a rich man be ſaved*; they made this univerſal exclamation, *Who then can be ſaved?* What rich man, might have been a proper conſequence, but they ſay in the general, *Who then?* implying, there is no man, no not a godly man, but if God ſhould not keep down that Cammels bunch, he would have ſome creature or other to be as affectionately and prejudicially to his ſalvation, carried out unto, as the rich man to his wealth. If then, the godly man can ſo hardly ſay, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and in earth, in compariſon of thee?* no wonder if the earthly man fall down to the ground, as the *Ægyptians*, like a ſtone into the Sea? That which is fighting and active in a regenerate man, muſt needs be conquering in an unregenerate.

The common gifts and graces of Gods Spirit, never cures this evil.

Fourthly, *That ſinfulneſſe which cannot be rooted out, and conquered by thoſe things that are above nature, and are in the next degree to grace, that certainly will abide prevalent till grace it ſelf come.* That which *Eliſha*'s Servant, nor his Staff will do, but *Eliſha* muſt come himſelf, that is hardly cured. Now thus it is; an unregenerate man, may have great abilities, may have the common gifts and graces of Gods Spirit; he may be admirable in the whole way of Religion; and yet this man who hath God and Chriſt ſo often in his mouth, may have the world and creatures more in his heart. So that he may in his heart, ſay, *Who will ſhew me any good?* when yet at that time, he may ſay, *Lord, lift up the light of thy countenance.* For, this latter is not deſired heartly, nor is he indeed weaned and

and ſet looſe from other things. The New-Teſtament is full of ſuch ſad Inſtances. Take *Judas*, a famous Apoſtle, eminent in Gifts and Miracles, often in communion with Chriſt, yet he never got his heart above the bagge; all the Sermons, all the Prayers, all the conference with Chriſt, did not make him aſcend higher. So that a mans duties and expreſſions may be high, even when his heart is as low as the earth; yea, when corrupt ends may put a man upon zeal and fervency: It's a creature that gives fire to all this heat. Thus the *third kind of hearers*, that *received the Word with joy*, it was the deceivableneſſe of the creature that undid them. *Demas* cleaveth to the preſent world, and that makes him forſake *Paul*, either totally, or in ſome ſpecial ſervice. If then, an immoderate heart to the creatures, may conſiſt with duties, gifts, and many inlargements, and much aſſiſtance in holy duties; if theſe are not able to caſt out theſe *Jebuſites*, no wonder the natural man cannot.

The point is proved from the nature of Converſion.

Fifthly, *That a natural man cannot ſet his heart higher then upon ſome creature, appeareth in the true nature of Converſion*: For that is not only turning from ſinne but the creature alſo. Exceſſive love to lawfull things; otherwiſe, is no more conſiſtent with grace, then to unlawfull things: For, if any thing have thy heart but God, let it be what it will be, thou art yet a natural man. When the Apoſtle (*Col.* 3.) diſcovered that the *godly are riſen with Chriſt*, he makes theſe Inferences: Firſt, *Set your affections on things above, and not on things below.* And then, *Mortifie your members which are upon the earth*: reckoning up ſeveral ſinnes. No man then, is converted, till he goeth out of all ſinnes, yea, and all creatures; and cleaveth to God himſelf. Therefore the Command is, to *turn to God, even to God*; he only is the *terminus ad quem* of our Converſion. If a man leave off his groſſe ſinnes, take upon him a religious Profeſſion; yet if he be not lifted above the world, as well as his former ſinnes, he is not Converted. It's not to God, even to God. So that a man muſt be undone, not only in reſpect of his ſinne, but all worldly hopes; he muſt with the Prodigall, begin to account the whole world but an huſk; as that which will do him no good, if God be not his Father. Therefore thoſe in the Parable, though invited to the Feaſt, yet refuſed to *come*, it was not any groſſe ſinne hindred them, it was not unlawfull luſts that did outwardly entangle them, but thoſe creatures which might have been lawfully enjoyed, and yet they have gone to the Feaſt alſo. *I have bought a Farm*; *I have married a Wife*: Theſe were not inconſiſtent with godlineſſe, but in the immoderate deſire after them. Oh, is not this the Millſtone about many a mans neck; I have a Shop, I have a Trade, and I cannot come! Oh then, ſet this home upon thy ſelf! Hath thy Converſion taken thee off from all creatures, as well as thy ſinnes, thou dareſt not love Husband, Wife, Houſes, or life it ſelf more then God? Thou doeſt eſteem the *favour* of God, and the *light of his countenance*, above all theſe things: Thou canſt truly ſay with *David*, as it followeth, *Thou haſt put more gladneſſe in my heart, then they have had when their beſt things encreaſed.* Many a man ſteppeth from his ſinnes, but into the world, and ſo falls ſhort of Heaven. The right underſtanding of true Converſion, makes it plain, that no natural man can go beyond the creature.

And from the reſtleſſe and unquiet heart of every natural man.

Sixthly, *It may be demonſtrated from the reſtleſſe and unquiet heart of every natural man*, that doth like the *Bee*, fly from flower to flower to get ſome Honey, but ſtayeth not long on one place. So that theſe in the text, will every day complain, *Who will ſhew us any good?* Should God grant them their deſire, and give them the good they would have, yet that would not ſatifie, ſtill they would be craving; ſtill they deſire ſomething more. As you ſee *Haman*, though he had never ſo much honour, yet the want of ſomething ſtill he deſired, made him tormented within himſelf. *Solomon* writeth an whole Book, to ſhew that all theſe things

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things are *vanity and vexation of ſpirit*; and though he ſet himſelf *on purpoſe* to *find* out *happineſſe* in the *creatures*, yet he grew *weary of all*. Now certainly, if a natural man could center his heart upon God, could put into that Haven, he would never ſuffer himſelf to be toſſed up and down in tempeſts and ſtormes, as he is, never having any reſt. There is no natural man that is contented with any creature he enjoyeth. Let him propound to himſelf ſuch and ſuch a condition, if he had ſuch and ſuch advantages; when he hath them, he is as far from ſolid contentment as at firſt. *Zacheus* his ſhooe can never fit *Goliah*'s foot. As a man would think that the Heavens ſeem to touch the earth at ſuch a diſtance, and if he ſhould aſcend ſuch high mountains, he could go no further, but when he cometh there, he ſeeth the Heavens as far from him as before. And therefore the godly man, whoſe heart is united, and hath taken God for his *Portion*, for his *Shepherd*, for his *all*, as *David* profeſſeth, he can *lie down and ſleep*; he can *take his reſt, fearing nothing in the world*. So that godlineſſe drawing the heart to God, is the beſt Antidote againſt all diſcontents whatſoever. He that can ſay, God is better then ten Husbands, then ten thouſand creatures, he is not diſquieted, but is the ſame in all conditions; becauſe his *God*, his *Father*, his *Portion* is alwaies the ſame. As he in the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtiory, when one brought him word, his *Father was dead*, he ſaid, *Deſine blaſphemias loqui, Pater enim meus immortalis eſt*. So thy Husband, thy Wealth, thy Friend, thy Portion, is the *immortal God*, who cannot die: but it's not thus with the ungodly. He is like a *tree in the wilderneſſe*, and like the *duſt blown with every wind*. So that the troubleſome, reſtleſſe, and diſcontented thoughts of every natural man, argueth that he doth not, and cannot aſcend up to God.

Their very approaches to God, demonſtrate that they prefer ſomething before him.

Seventhly, *It's demonſtrated thus, that if at any time natural men make their applications to God, thoſe very approaches do declare, that they love ſomething more then God.* For it might be an Objection, *Why cannot a natural man be above the creature? Do they not in diſtreſſes, in times of calamity, ſeek unto God? May they not faſt and humble themſelves?* It's granted; but even theſe duties demonſtrate, they have only a natural carnal heart, making uſe of God only to ſatisfie their earthly deſires. *Hoſ.*7.14. God there by the Prophet complaineth, that they did not *cry unto him, when they howled on their beds*: *They aſſemble themſelves for their corn and wine.* You ſee, they were as carnal and as earthly in their Faſt-daies, and publique Humiliations, as in their worldly affairs; and therefore he compareth their *cryes* in *Prayer*, to the *howling* of Beaſts, that want food, and are ready to famiſh. Such are like *Noah's Raven*, that came to *Noah* only while ſhe wanted food, but when ſhe had proviſion, never came to him more. Thus natural men, they approach to God, but it's wholly becauſe their hearts are inordinately ſet upon the creature; it's not becauſe they delight in him.

Eighthly, This is evident, *In that no natural man can truly deſire the coming of Chriſt, and the putting of an end to the faſhion of this world*: Whereas this is made the *Character* of the godly, *to look for, and to haſten the Kingdom of Chriſt.* The Church cryeth, *Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly.* They have enough of the world. It's to their loſſe to be kept ſo long from Heaven. As the godly Patriarchs counted themſelves Pilgrims, and did look for a better Countrey. This is, or ought to be the frame of every godly man. But now the natural man can no more reach this heavenly frame, and deſire *that Kingdom of Glory might come*, then he can touch the bodily Heavens with his finger. Hence the going out of this world, that they ſhall not enjoy the comforts and creatures they have had, is the greateſt fear they are daily in bondage unto. It's true, a godly man hath a great part of this unwillingneſſe in him alſo; but that ariſeth, partly from the natural fear of death, or ſpiritual doubts about his condition; or becauſe earthly things are yet ſo much in heart: but he deſireth to have it otherwaies.

The Sinfulneſſe and Wofull Aggravation of this Eſtate, to be in the Number of theſe Votaries, as it were, in the Text.

The creature is unable to help us in our greateſt exigencies.

And firſt, *This is a very dreadfull and dangerous eſtate*, viz. *not to be able to lift up our ſelves above the creature, becauſe of the inſufficiency and utter inability that is in it, to help us in our greateſt exigencies.* Then when the ſoul hath moſt need, then it faileth. As it's with Land-floods in Winter-time, then they come, when there is water enough, and none needeth them; but when in Summer, the greateſt drought is, and there is moſt neceſſity, then they appear not. Thus every creature ſeemeth comfortable and helpfull, when we are in our glad and merry condition; but in thoſe times, when, if ever, they ſhould be a ſolace to us, then they utterly forſake us.

Now we may take notice of *three choice times wherein (if ever) the ſoul may be in the greateſt neceſſity.* As

Firſt, At ſuch times, *when God ſhall ſet home the guilt of ſinne upon our conſcience*, and make us to find the ſting of it at our very hearts. In ſuch agonies, and ſoul bitterneſſe, bring him all the glory, profit, and pleaſure, of the creatures ſquezed together; bring the quinteſſence of them, and they will do no good. Oh, now the ſenſe of Gods wrath, the ſcorching guilt within, cannot be allayed by ſuch applications! Whereas one ſmile of Gods favour, would preſently command all the waves to be ſtill. *Pſal.* 39. 11. *When thou with rebukes doth chaſten man for ſinne; thou makeſt his beauty* (or that which is deſirable in him) *to conſume like a moth.* Oh what a change is then made! His honours, his friends, his greatneſſe can do him no good at all. And this was experimentally true in *Judas*, when the guilt of his ſinne began to ſmart and torment him, ſee in what a wofull agony he is; and thoſe thirty Pieces, he ſo greedily coveted, (alas) now he dareth not keep them, he throweth them away: and his great Confederates, they never pitty him, when he cryed out, *I have ſinned in betraying the innocent blood*; for they ſaid, *What is that to us, look thou to it?* Thus all the creatures will leave thee, when God ſhall be angry. Oh look thou to it! We cannot help you; You might have been wiſer; We did not force you. Thus thou wilt find every ereature to be a *lye* in the greateſt time of thy anguiſh.

Secondly, Another great ſtreight thou wilt be put upon, is *the time and hour of Death.* For then (if ever) as we are in the greateſt want, ſo the creature we have loved, ſhould moſt appear for us; but the Scripture tels us, *We came naked into the world, and we ſhall carry out nothing with us.* There is not any creature thou haſt inordidately deſired, that can accompany thee any longer: All muſt leave thee. Now what a ſad condition is this, to be ſtript naked of all? The good things thou haſt embraced, cannot be enjoyed any longer. Oh what would the ſoul now give for the *light of Gods favour!* Now a world for ſome evidence of his love: Now he cryeth out, as that Cardinall once did, *If he had pleaſed God as the King, or if loved God as the creature, he had not been in that deſolate eſtate.* So that it's not to be mattered, what content and comfort thou findeſt in the creature, while thou art in health and mirth, but when thou art breathing the laſt, when thou ſhalt ſee the face of creatures no more: Oh then, think how much better had it been, if I had ſpent my time and ſtrength for God, which I did for the creature!

Thirdly, Another great time of exigency is, *When we ſhall be arraigned at the*

the Tribunall of God, to be judged by him for every evil and wicked way. This is a time of the greateſt terror and horror. Then Chriſt as a Judge is before thy eye: Then the Devils thy Accuſers are all ſtanding by: Then the torments of Hell are before thee, and that burning Lake of Brimeſtone, in which thou art ready to be caſt. Oh, now which of all the creatures thou truſtedeſt in, can give thee any help! Call now to any of thoſe that were thy props, and ſee wat good they can do to thee. Where is *Dives* his great wealth, that could not help him to a drop of water? Oh, at ſuch a dreadfull time, would not the *loving favour of God*, be more then all the world to thee! Then if God ſhould ſay, *Come ye bleſſed*, would not this be more comfort then ever thou hadſt all thy life? And if on the other ſide, God ſhall ſay, *Depart ye curſed*, can any thing withſtand it? Can any creature ſay, Lord, he ſhall not go, I will ſave him; I'le deliver him? Theſe things then being thus, that there are ſuch times, when all the creatures of the world are not able to queneh the fire that will conſume thee; what folly and wickedneſſe is it to mind that which will then deceive thee, and not to regard the favour of God, which will then be moſt precious and ready to help in this day of adverſity, that will moſt be ſeen?

Immoderate love of the creature is inconſiſtent with the love of God.

Secondly, *Take heed of immoderacy to the creature, for the immoderate love of that is not conſiſtent with the love of God.* Thou maieſt ſpeak much, and profeſſe much to the contrary, but the inordinate love of the creature cannot ſtand with the love of God; yea, it's *emnity to God*. Doth not God require, we ſhould *love him with all our might, all our ſtrength*? So that he will not allow any love to any thing elſe but him. Indeed, *When we deſire any creature in ſubordination to him, as a meanes of glorifying him, and thereby brought nearer to God*; this is not a-againſt God. The Schoolmen ſay, *That it's the ſame gracious habit of love, that carrieth us out to love God, and our neighbour becauſe of him*; and ſo it is of every creature elſe As we ſay, ſuch a great Houſe, is ſuch a mans: Now, though he have many ſervants dwelling there, yet we ſay, it's his Houſe, not the Servants, becauſe they are for and under him. Thus if God do chiefly dwell in our hearts, then (though we love other things, yet becauſe this is wholly in reference to God) we may truly ſay, We love none but him. But now, when the love of the creature oppoſeth God, makes us contrary to him, or makes us love him or holy duties the leſſe, then we are to conclude, That this cannot ſtand with godlineſſe. So that not only groſſe ſinnes practiſed, but any creature habitually and exceſſively delighted in above God, is alſo incompatible with it.

Is's a wofull ſnare and temptation.

Thirdly, *Take heed of this eſtate, becauſe it's a wofull ſnare and temptation to thee.* He that is inordinately affected with any earthly comfort, this will upon all occaſions, bring him into the fouleſt ſinnes that can be imagined. He will do any thing; damn his ſoul over and over, to obtain it: As *Judas*, becauſe he was immoderately ſet upon gain, he betrayeth Chriſt; though he was admoniſhed of it, though he was told in particular he was the man: Though heard what a fearfull condition ſuch a man was in, that ſhould betray Chriſt, yet nothing can ſtop him, but he will ſatisfie that corrupt appetite of his. Oh then, take heed again and again, of ſuch an inordinrate appetite! It will be thy poyſon and damnation: It will one time or other put thee upon ſuch horrible actions, as will make the hearts of others to tremble, when they hear it; yea, ſuch as thou wilt abhor, before they are committed. As it was in *Hazael*, *Am I dog* (ſaid he) *that I ſhould do ſo*? And truly, it is very ſad, when God, by his Providence, ſhall ſuffer ſuch advantages for thy luſt to fall out; us *Judas* had a *bagge*, *Hazael* a *Kingdom*; all which were like ſparkes to that tinder. The Devil findes the room then garniſhed and ſwept for him. Let a man profeſſe never ſo much love to God, and be never ſo forward in Religion, yet if he be not mortifyed to every creature, there will come a fire from without, and conſume this bramble.

The Word is unprofitable to a man, while he preferres the creature.

Fourthly, *This is a fearfull eſtate, becauſe the word of God, though preached never ſo powerfully, and preſſed over and over again, yet it cannot do any good, while ſuch a temper is on thee.* This is the *Dalilah* that will alwaies entice thee. *Intus exiſtens prohibet alienum.* You ſee, even in our Savious preaching, though *none ever taught as he did*; Though this was accompanied with aſtoniſhing Miracles, yet the *Phariſees*, who loved the world, and the glory of men, they derided him. Yea, our Saviour told the very Diſciples themſelves, *Joh.*5.44. *How can ye believe, if ye ſeek glory of one another?* And therefore, at another time, he *took a little child, ſetting him before them, that if they did not become like ſuch, they could never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* As long therefore, as any thing ſits too cloſe to our hearts, we cannot be Chriſts Diſciples. You ſee thoſe hearers, that went ſo farre as to receive the Word *with joy*, and to bring forth *ſome fruit*, yet it was the *deceivableneſſe of riches*, that did *choak* all. Never then expect, that any Miniſtry, or any Preaching ſhould ever do good to thee, while this or that creature is ſo enammouring of thee.

It is a tormenting ſinne.

Fifthly, *Take heed of this creature-affection, becauſe it's a tormenting ſinne.* It is not only a ſinne, but a torment, and vexation withall. Some ſinnes bring a ſweetneſſe with them, though they leave an Hell hereafter; but this ſinne, for the moſt part, brings an Hell with it. What man is there, inordinately affected to any thing, that you may not call *the Devils Martyr*, he endureth and ſuffereth ſo much? He is under many vexations, and *through many tribulations he goeth to Hell* In what a fiery Furnace was *Haman*, though exalted ſo high above others? And doth not *Solomon*, the wiſe man, pen an whole Book, to inform of this, that *all is but vexation of ſpirit*? And what the Apoſtle ſpeaks of one particular, is true of all. 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. *Thoſe that will be rich, they fall into many temptations, and peirce themſelves through with many cares.* They are as one Martyr in Gods cauſe, that was by his Scholars ſtabb'd all over, to death, by Penknives. Thus πεισπυρον. Inſomuch, that if you could ſee the naked ſoul of any man, inordinately affected to the creature, you would ſee it all over wounded and ſcourged, full of tormenting cares and fears; never in any quiet or ſafe content at all. Oh then, conſider what an enemy thou art to thy ſelf! Godlineſſe would be great *gain* to thee; It would *make thee glad and rejoyce in the Lord*; It would teach thee how to *have all things*, and how to *want*: but while thy heart is vaſſalized thus to the creature, no quietneſſe can be in thy bones. And what a folly is this, to be miſerable here, and miſerable hereafter?

All the things thus affected, are vanities.

Sixthly, *They are miſerable, who are thus craving after worldly good things, becauſe the Scripture repreſents all theſe things but as vanity*; As that which is a meer *lye*; Called therefore often a *Shadow*, which the fooliſh child catcheth at, as ſome reall ſubſtance, when it is but (as was ſaid) a black nothing. Therefore you ſee *Solomon* expoſtulating after this manner, *Why doſt thou ſet thy eyes upon that which is not*, Prov.23.5. That which at another time, the wiſe man ſaith, *It anſwereth all things*, and calls it a *defence*; yet here he ſaith, *It is not*: Even as the whole Creation may be ſaid to be *non ens*, comparatively to God. And therefore God is called *Jehova*: He is ſaid to be, *I am what I am*: All creatures have not a being comparatively to him. If then the beſt and moſt uſefull of creatures, be ſuch a nothing to God, even whole *Nations*, *are but as a drop*, *or duſt*; yea, they are ſaid to be *leſſe then nothing*, Iſa. 40. 17. What folly is it, to leave the Fountain of all happineſſe, and to catch after the ſhadow? Oh then, let the godly ſoul, which enjoyeth God, when tempted by the creature to immoderate love, ſay, as the Fig-tree and Olive-tree, *Shall I leave my ſweetneſſe!* Shall I part with my happineſſe and bleſſedneſſe I have in God, and go and tear my ſelf with bryers? For ſo indeed, when we ſeek to the creatures for refuge in any diſtreſſe, we do with the ſheep, run into bryers, that

that conſume more then ſhelter. 1 *Cor.*7. the Apoſtle calleth it, *The faſhion of the World*, not the *ſubſtance*; and he ſaith, it *paſſeth away*: Whereas God is ſaid to be *alwaies* the *ſame*, and to *abide from everlaſting to everlaſting*. Therefore if thy heart were wiſe, thou wouldeſt ſee the vanity of theſe things.

Seventhly, *This muſt needs be an hainous ſinne, becauſe it's a breach of the firſt Commandement; it's direct Idolatry.* Worſe then when we worſhip the true God, after a falſe and unlawfull manner; yet how ſeverely doth God puniſh this kind of Idolatry? How often do the Prophets threaten, becauſe of this? But now thou, who giveſt thy heart licence to delight in theſe things below, thou ſinneſt againſt the firſt Commandement: Thou erreſt in the *Object* of thy worſhip, and not in the *manner*. And is God only zealous of outward worſhip, not of inward? Is he angry only when men bow the body to wood and ſtones, and not when the ſoul is proſtituted to the creature? Maieſt thou not juſtly expect, that as God ſaid to thoſe Idolaters, *They ſhould call and ſee if their Idol gods would hear and deliver them?* So the Lord may bid thee call to thoſe creatures, to ſee if they will ſave thee; if they will deliver thee from Hell. Do not then wonder at the folly of *Micha*, who cryed, *They have taken away my gods.* If gods, Why did they not ſave themſelves? And thus here it is, death *takes away thy gods*: The fire may take away thy gods. Oh, that men would at laſt be awakened out of there blindneſſe and folly herein! It's direct Idolatry.

Eighthly, *This creature affection is a wofull condition, becauſe it's a debaſing of a mans ſelf, and making of him a ſlave to that which he ſhould rule over.* All the creatures, they are made for his uſe. God, out of his rich abundance, hath provided theſe things liberally for thee, but they are given thee only to uſe. As the belly is for meates, and meates for the belly; but God will deſtroy both the one and the other. So all theſe creatures that are corruptible, they are for thee who art alſo corruptible; but God will deſtroy both the one and the other. Therefore thou ſinneſt againſt that noble End why God made thee: It was to enjoy him. He did not give a reaſonable immortal ſoul, and made thee the maſter-piece of his viſible creatures, that thou ſhouldſt crawle on the duſt. Say rather with *Auſtin*, *Feciſti domine cor noſtrum, & irrequietum eſt*, Thou madeſt our heart, and it is reſtleſſe till it come to thee again. It's a debaſing of a man.

Uſe of Admonition, to every unregenerate man, to inform himſelf throughly of his wretched and undone eſtate. Thou canſt not go beyond a creature, and therefore ſhalt never partake of that infinite eternal happineſſe which is in God himſelf. Doſt thou not plainly ſee, the vanity and uncertainty of all other things? Can any creature ſay, I will juſtifie thee; I will glorifie thee? Conſider how greately it is to thy loſſe, to leave the Sun, and go to the Starres: To forſake the Ocean, and take up a drop. Oh, will theſe things be ever as good as a God to thee. And then in the next place, Conſider how dearly the enjoying of theſe things will coſt thee. Doth not our Saviour ſay, *What will it profit a man to winne the whole world, and looſe his ſoul*, Mat. 16. 26? If now, the whole world thou gaineſt, would be no advantage; thou wouldeſt be a wretched looſer for all that: Oh think, I get a finite good, and looſe an infinite! I looſe an eternal good, for a temporary; a particnlar, for an univerſal. This will be thy complaint in Hell to all eternity, for thy madneſſe herein.

Antidotes and Meanes againſt this Creature-Affection.

I ſhall now conclude this firſt Doctrine, with giving *ſeverall directive Antidotes and meanes againſt this creature-affection*, that ſo being looſened from the world, our hearts may be fixed on God. And

Such as prefer the world before God, cannot Pray.

Firſt, Let this conſideration move you, *That you cannot addreſſe your ſelves unto God in Prayer, while thy heart is not above the World.* Doth not our Saviour in that direction of his to Prayer, give God that deſcription, of a *Father in Heaven?* And why ſo, but that we ſhould lift up our hearts and affections thither? So that as in Antiquity, the *Deacon* cryed, *Surſum corda*; that they ſhould not reſt upon the element in the Sacrament, but look up to Chriſt himſelf. Thus alſo in every duty and performance, a *Surſum corda*, a lift up your hearts, is neceſſary. Therefore upon this ground it it, that we may truly ſay, *No natural man did ever pray in his whole life*; did ever *perform* any one holy duty ſince he was born; becauſe he could never truly *lift up his heart to God.* Prayer is called, *Aſcenſio mentis ad Deum.* Now a natual man can no more aſcend upwards towards God, then the earth can have an aſcending motion. Every creature that did creep upon the earth, it was unclean. And thus all thy duties and religious performances, which creep and crawle upon the ground, which ſoar not up high, they make thee unclean and abominable before God. Now ſhould not this Argument be like a ſword in thy bowels: What? live ſuch a life, wherein thou canſt not pray; no Prayer will do any good? Continue in ſuch an eſtate, wherein thou art not able to draw nigh to God, but art the Bird tyed by the ſnare, that would fain fly up, but is pulled back again? Thus thou haſt ſome ſighes, and ſome deſires, but preſently thou art pulled down again with thoſe clogs of creatures that are upon thee.

The heart is too noble for the creature.

Secondly, Conſider, *Thy heart, it is the choiceſt and chiefeſt Treaſure about thee: It is too noble for any creature.* Thou doeſt diſhonour thy ſelf, in making it ſerve the creature. We ſee God himſelf, calls for the *heart* of a man as the beſt Sacrifice. *My ſonne, give me thy heart*, Prov. 23. 26. And *Prov.* 4. 23. *Keep thy heart with all diligence.* So that as the heart naturally conſidered, is the principle of all life; and nature hath placed a wonderfull defence about it. Thus the heart ſpiritually alſo conſidered, is the chief fountain of all our happineſſe and miſery. Therefore it's ſure deſtruction, to let thy heart runne out upon the creature; that is, to make the chiefeſt of thy ſoul ſubordinate to that which is farre inferiour. It's as if thou ſhoudeſt let ſwine, or ſuch unclean creatures, come into thy choiceſt Chamber. It was a ſad calamity to *Pharaoh*, when the frogs and lice crept up into his Chamber, and he could not be quiet in his moſt retired room; no leſſe, yea, farre greater an evil it is, when thou ſuffereſt theſe fading creatures to get into the heart. Keep that for God alone: Nothing is to poſſeſſe that place, but God himſelf. He that filleth Heaven and earth, and makes that his dwelling place, doth alſo require thy heart. Hence it is, that the Apoſtle *James* calleth thoſe, who love the world, *Adulterers* and *Adultereſſes*, *Jam.* 4. 4. For the heart of a man, ſhould be kept as the chaſt Wife to Chriſt, and love no other but him. Therefore when it lets looſe her deſires to the creatures, then it becomes guilty of Adultery; then God is jealous. Oh then, make more account where thy heart is placed! Look to that more diligently: for it's not fit any creature ſhould be placed nearer to that, then God himſelf. Doth not our Saviour ſay, *He that loveth Father, or Mother, or life it ſelf, more then me, cannot be my Diſciple?*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *Meditate on this, That all thoſe, who ever loved the creature immoderately, have at laſt, found the vanity and unprofitableneſſe of it.* They have been wearied, and glutted with it. As he ſaid to that Tyrant, *Satia te ſanguine, quem ſitiiſti*, He gave him blood enough at laſt. So commonly, God in anger doth give thee abundance of ſuch things as thou deſireſt, but they are for thy hurt. Thou deſireſt them as the hydropical man water, or as the feavouriſh man Wine; which things, if they obtain, their diſeaſe is the more encreaſed, and they become the more dangerous. The wiſe man obſerveth it of riches, *Eccleſ.* Chap 5.13. he calls it *a ſore evil; That riches are kept by the owners thereof, to their hurt.* Now then, is not this very dangerous to thee, to place thy heart upon that which will be poyſon and bane to thee? This is true of honours, preferments; any creature, if exceſſively deſired, will do a man hurt: It's like ſurfetting upon Honey. And this is the reaſon why God keepeth his own children in ſo many ſtreights and difficulties; he doth not give them the things they deſire: Yea, commonly God doth croſſe them in all their earthly affections and undertakings: ſo that they cannot have thoſe mercies they would have. And the Lord is herein very mercifull to them; for that which is inordinately deſired, would be alſo immoderately poſſeſſed; and ſo like too much blood, it would quickly breed mortal diſeaſes in thee. So that that very conſideration, which often makes thee grudging and diſcontented, may juſtly put thee upon thankfulneſſe: Thou maieſt bleſſe God that he doth theſe things for thee, which are *ad Sanitatem, non ad voluptatem*: It's Gods goodneſſe, that I have not the mercies I would have; for then I ſhould be undone. And that even the godly are apt to ſeek immoderately after theſe earthly comforts, appeareth in that reproof to *Baruch*, *Jer.* 45. 5. *Seekeſt thou great things for thy ſelf? Seek them not. Baruch* an eminent man in godlineſſe, even in thoſe daies, when there was nothing but deſtruction univerſal threatned; even then he was apt to ſeek great things for himſelf. Yea, the Apoſtle complaineth of the whole Church of God almoſt at *Philippi*, Phil.2.22. *For all ſeek their own, and not the things of Jeſus Chriſt.* This diſpoſition being thus in the godly, did not the Lord both quench the fire within, by ſanctifying grace, and remove the fewel from without, he would quickly be all in a flame.

Conſider that all that have over-loved the creature, have experienced the vanity of it.

Fourthly, *Conſider that therefore it is, God hath mingled gall with the honey of every creature; That therefore it is, every thing is obtained with difficulty, and poſſeſſed with cares, that ſo we might not reſt upon the creature.* As God made *Ægypt* a place of oppreſſion and miſery to the *Iſraelites*, that ſo they might willingly go out, and ſeek for *Canaan*. Thus the Lord hath made the world a valley of teares: He hath cauſed every relation, every conditon, to have its great exerciſe, that ſo God might be *all in all*. That as you ſee, out of the ſame root groweth both the Roſe and the Prickels about it; ſolikewiſe out of the ſame creature, out of the ſame condition, cometh both Honey and a ſting: both that which is comfortable, and that which is moleſting. Now Gods end in this, is to make thee not with *Peter*, to ſay, *It's good to be here*; but to ſeek out for a better good. Thou muſt therefore be very fooliſh, and bruitiſh, if this experience doth not teach thee. Hath not *Solomon* made this Motto upon all the creatures, That they are *vanity and vexation of ſpirit?* Not only *vanity*, but *vexation*. Wilt thou therefore lay thy ſelf down to ſleep, when there are ſo many bryers and thornes under thee. Oh ſay, This is not my reſt! Here is not all good: There is a better place then this world; and a greater happineſſe, then the enjoying of the creature. Even the wiſeſt, the richeſt, and moſt potent in the world, have not had their content, but thornes have been in their ſides, and their hath been two drops of gall to one of Honey. That Starre called wormwood, hath fallen into our waters, and made them bitter. What then ſhould we learn from this, but that it's our beſt wiſdome, and our ſafeſt undertaking,

Conſider the reaſon why God mingles gall with the Honey of every creature.

taking, to look up unto God as the fountain of all happineſſe? As of him, in whom we ſhall not have any occaſion of wearineſſe. There will never be cauſe to complain, that I find not God ſo full of comfort and bleſſedneſſe to me, as I expected. Yea, God will be unto us above all that we can expect: For, it cannot enter into the heart of a natural man, to conceive the fulneſſe and excellency of God, And therefore the natural men of the world, are commanded to *taſte, and ſee how good God is.* It's for want of this ſpiritual and heavenly experience, that we are ſo apt to be affected too much with the creature, and nothing at all with God.

Conſider how inſufficient they are of themſelves to help and comfort us.

Fifthly, Remember, *That theſe creatures, whatſoever they are for comfort, they are not originally and of themſelves ſo, but are only Inſtruments and Conduit-Pipes.* And therefore they are defective in theſe Particulars.

1. *They cannot give them any comfort or content of themſelves*: They are not able to ſatisfie and quiet the heart. For how many have been under the greateſt mercies in the world, and have enjoyed all the outward abundance that their hearts could deſire, and yet for all that, have an unquiet diſcontented ſpirit? And the reaſon is, becauſe it's God only that faſhioneth the heart; It's he, that formeth the ſpirit. And therefore under the ſaddeſt afflictions that can poſſibly befall: we ſee God made *David* of a quiet and ſatisfied ſpirit; he could *lie down, and take his reſt*, when his own Son was up in armes againſt him, and ready to deprive him both of life and Kingdom at once. So it's ſaid, *David encouraged himſelf in his God*, when he was in that ſad diſtreſſe at *Zicklag*. So that it's not the conditions without, but the framing of the heart within, that makes miſerable or happy. Is it not then folly as well as ſinne, to look after this or that creature inordinately, which of it ſelf cannot adde one Cubit to thy contentation? Thou maieſt be in a Priſon, yea in Hell, while thou liveſt in a vaſt and large *Palace*; and all this is, becauſe it's not the creature, not the Condition, but God himſelf that formeth and frameth the ſoul in a right manner.

2. *As the condition cannot effectively work upon thee, ſo neither can they fill themſelves with any comfort objectively, any further then God puts into them.* Theſe are ſtreames that have water no longer then the Spring filleth them. That as it is with all creatures, even man himſelf, that he hath no longer a being, or exiſtence then God giveth it to him; if he withdraweth his arm, the ſtrongeſt man falls immediately to duſt. Thus it is with all creatures; they do not comfort or originally help of themſelves, but as enabled by God. The bread doth not nouriſh, but as bleſ't by God: The fire could not burn, when God reſtrained it; and even the garments and ſhooes of the *Iſraelites*, did not wax old or conſume, while Gods bleſſing was upon them. Thus then it is, no creature hath any thing of it ſelf to refreſh us with, but as God puts into it; even as the Conduit-Pipe, runs water or Wine, as it is poured into it. And thus do all creatures communicate mercies and comforts, as they are quickned thereunto by God.

Laſtly, *The creature in being but an inſtrument, and having all from God, doth thereby demonſtrate how much bleſſedneſſe is in enjoying God himſelf.* If a drop be ſo ſweet, how much more is an Ocean? If a Star be ſo welcome, how much more is the Sun? Therefore thou ſhouldſt ſay thus to thy ſelf, If ſuch a relation, ſuch a creature be ſo comfortable and good to me, what may God himſelf be, who is ſo full of all good? *Si tanta pulchritudo in creaturâ, quanta in creatore*, as the Antient ſaid? If thy heart were ſpiritual, it would aſcend thus by the creature to God.

Heaven and glory cannot be obtained without a preeminent and tranſcendent affection to all other things.

Sixthly, *Lay this above all things to heart, that Heaven and glory cannot be obtained, without a preeminent and tranſcendent affection to all others things.* You cannot intend the heart and affection to other things, and to ſalvation likewiſe. *Mat.*11.12. *The Kingdom of Heaven ſuffers violence, and the violent take it by force.*

force. Hence it is alſo, that God requireth we ſhould *love him with all our ſoul and might.* Theſe things then being attained only with the higheſt and chiefeſt affections and deſires of the ſoul, how can thy heart be for Heaven and the world alſo? Hence alſo are thoſe Commands, that we muſt *ſeek the Kingdom of Heaven in the firſt place*; that we muſt *not labour for the meat that periſheth.* And hence thoſe, who endeavour after Heaven, are compared to a *traveller*; to one that *runneth* in a *race*; to one that *combates* with an *enemy*: Now, none can effectually mind theſe things, and other things alſo. Can a man that runnes in the race, look to the Apples or fruit that groweth upon the tree, and ſeek to gather them? Is not this the way to make him certainly loſe the Crown? No leſſe ought our intention, induſtry and labour to be after Heaven, leſt we looſe the Crown of Glory. Certainly this falſe perſwaſion of obtaining the Crown of Glory ſo eaſily, and that Heaven may be had upon ſo eaſie termes, is that which damneth thouſands. For how can it be, that thou ſhouldſt ſo eagerly attend to theſe things? Didſt thou think, there is a greater and more neceſſary good, which will require greater affections? Shall the food of my body be got with the ſweat of my browes, and not much rather eternal Glory hereafter?

Conſider how ſome Heathens and ſuperſtitious perſons have trampled upon earthly things, to attain a notable end.

Seventhly, Neglect not this Meditation, *What Heathens and ſuperſtitious perſons have done in a miſguided way for ſome notable end.* How have they trampled all earthly things under their feet? Who hath not heard of *Crates the Thebane*, that parted with all his wealth to give himſelf to Philoſophy? And how greatly will the wilfull poverty of ſome miſguided Zealots in Antiquity condemn us herein? I ſpeak not of that wilfull renouncing of earthly wealth in Popery that now is; for they do thereby provide a better temporal proviſion for themſelves: but I ſpeak of the old Hermites, and Anchorets, who miſtaking many places of Scripture, as not only in preparation of ſpirit, when God ſhould require, they did command a leaving of theſe things, but alſo actually to throw away all things, did thereby denude themſelves of all that wealth, and of all thoſe earthly enjoyments that otherwiſe they had; thinking that they could never be ſaved, if they did enjoy theſe things. Now this actual abdication of all things, is not a duty; therein they were miſguided with a prepoſterous zeal; but yet in preparation of ſpirit, we ought to part with all the earthly comforts of this world: and when there may be ſpecial Commands, or particular occaſions, then we are actually to leave all; as you ſee the Diſciples and Martyrs did. Oh then, do thou blame thy ſelf for all immoderate affections to theſe things! Think how will Heathens and ſuperſtitious Perſons riſe up to thy condemnation.

Eighthly, *If Chriſt hath repreved thoſe who were godly, for their external cares, when yet notwithſtanding it hath been in the root of it, from all good affection to himſelf; how much rather will he condemn thoſe who are immoderately addicted to theſe things, and that from a principle of averſneſſe to him, and weariſomeneſſe in his ſervice?* Now for this reproof, you have a notable Inſtance, *Luk.* 10. 40, 41. where *Martha*, out of her abundant affection to entertain Chriſt, did not as her ſiſter, *ſit at Jeſus his feet*, and *hear his Word*, but was *carefull* about the *entertaining* him; but Chriſt ſaith, *Thou art troubled about many things, one thing is needfull, and Mary hath choſen the better part.* You ſee Chriſt preferring a diligent attending to the meanes of grace, before all kind entertainment of himſelf. Hence alſo it is, that the Diſciples were not allowed to have an inordinate affection even to his humanity and bodily preſence. They are reproved for their grief and ſorrow, when he was bodily to leave them, becauſe this hindered his ſpiritual preſence. If then, we may not in theſe caſes be exceſſive in our affections, how much leſſe in meer earthly things?

THE GODLY MANS CHOICE:

SHEWING

That a gracious heart doth more eſteem the *favour* of *God*, and the *light of his Countenance*, then any earthly thing whatſoever.

Pſalm 4. 6.

Lord, lift thou up the light of thy Countenance upon us.

WE are now come to the ſecond part of the Text, and in that we have the *ſpirit of David*, and all godly men expreſſed, and that is contrary to the deſires of earthly men, while they thus earneſtly long after ſome earthly good. He ſheweth what is that, which his ſoul doth moſt thirſt after, and that is, *The light of Gods favour.*

For the right underſtanding of the words, there is ſome difference amongſt Interpreters: Some Popiſh Expoſitors, render it *aſſertively*, not *imperatively*; *Signatum eſt ſuper nos*, the *light of thy countenance is ſealed upon us.* Thus *Bellarmine*, and generally the Schoolmen; They bring it to prove, *That there is ſomething of Gods Image left in every man, whereby he is able to diſcern good and hate evil.* As if the ſenſe of the Pſalmiſt was this; *Why do the men of the World ſeek thus after earthly good things, and are ſo uncertain in their affections; for God hath placed the light of reaſon and*

and conſcience in every man, whereby he is able to know there is the chiefeſt good? Now although we do not refuſe this interpretation, upon *Illyricus* his Reaſon, that there are *no implanted principles of knowledge about God*; yet the context doth more evince the latter, that it is by *Prayer-wiſe* to God. And although *Bellarmine* ſaith, the *Hebrew* may be pointed, ſo as to make *Signatum eſt*, and that the *Septuagint* know better then the *Maſorites*; yet becauſe it's ordinary to put *Samech* for *Sin*, and *He* for *Alph*, as here *Neſah* for *New*; we take it to ſignifie to *lift up*. And although it ſhould be from *nes vixillum*, that could not overthrow the ſenſe. And the *Septuagint*, ἐσημειώθη, doth not ſignifie an impreſſion of any thing in us, but a *manifeſtation*: As in that place, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 14. *Note ſuch a man by an Epiſtle.* We therefore underſtand it of *David*'s Prayer, *That God would give a manifeſtation of his gracious love to him.* A Metaphor taken from men, who when reconciled, do willingly turn their face, and look pleaſantly upon thoſe whom they delight in. Obſerve,

That a gracious heart doth more eſteem the favour of God, and the light of his countenance, then any earthly thing whatſoever.

This *light of Gods countenance*, is often ſpoken of by *David*, *Pſal.* 44. 3. The original of all the mercies God vouchſafed to *Iſrael*, is ſaid to be *Gods power, and the light of his countenance, becauſe he had a favour to them.* So Pſal. 99. 15. *Bleſſed are they that know the joyfull ſound, they ſhall walk in the light of thy countenance.* This *favour* of God, is that which makes a *glad* and *joyfull* heart. Hence in Antiquity, it was a proverbial ſpeech to expreſſe an happy man by, *Deus vidit*, God hath looked on ſuch a man.

Though the *light of Gods countenance*, doth ſometimes ſignifie only his *bare knowledge* and *omniſcience*, as *Pſal.* 90. 8. *Thou haſt put our ſecret ſinnes in the light of thy countenance*: as Gods face is ſometimes upon a man for good, and ſometimes it's ſaid to be againſt man, for his hurt: but the ſumme is, That as it is with a man, when he is *pleaſed* with another, he *turneth his face to him, looketh pleaſantly and cheerfully*: as *Job* ſaith of himſelf, *Job* 29. 24. Thus when God is pleaſed with a man, then the Believer apprehends nothing but love and favour from God: He ſeeth not frowns, but ſmiles in his face: And he ſeeth God to be to him, by the *eye of Faith*: As *Eſau*'s face was to *Jacob*, pleaſing; and therefore ſaid to be *like the face of God.*

Let us conſider *what* this phraſe doth expreſſe. And

What this phraſe, *to lift up the light of Gods countenance upon a man*, implyeth?

Firſt, *It ſuppoſeth that all our iniquities and ſinnes, they are pardoned and blotted out.* For as long as our guilt is upon us, and God ſeeth that, he turneth his face from us; He is an angry Judge: He is of *purer eyes, then to behold ſuch things. Your iniquities divide between you and me.* Hence, when ſinne is ſaid to be *pardoned*, the expreſſion is, that it is *covered*, Pſal. 32. implying, that ſinne of it ſelf, is loathſome and abominable to his eyes. Not but that he ſeeth ſin in every Believer, only it's *pardoned in Chriſt*, and ſo not imputed to the Believer: And though God ſee it, ſo as to chaſten for it, yet not to adjudge to eternal deſtruction. And this is ſo great a bleſſedneſſe, that *David*, *Pſal.* 32. doth only call this ſo: *Bleſſed is the man* (not whom God makes great, rich, and honoured in this world, but) *to whom he imputeth no ſinne at all.* This the humbled ſoul counteth a mercy, and in its ſad agonies, prayeth for the *light of Gods countenance*: All the world doeth him no good: All the creatures that would comfort him, do but as thoſe that would give Chriſt vinegar and gall to drink. *David* himſelf (*Pſal.* 51.) when in his great conflicts, becauſe of his ſinne, minds not his Kingdom, or honours, but prayeth, that God would *have mercy upon him, according to his loving kindneſſe.* Thoſe tender mercies of God, he flyeth unto. Till therefore ſinne be removed, Gods anger and wrath belongs unto us.

Secondly, *In this is implyed Gods favour and love towards us; that he is pleaſed, and become reconciled with us.* If the wrath of a King be ſo terrible, how much more is the wrath of God? But when the *light of his countenance* is towards us, then he is gracious; then his eye, his face, are all pleaſant and reviving. When *David* is reconciled to *Abſolom*, then it's no longer commanded, that he ſhould *keep from his preſence*, but his Fathers bowels long to ſee him again. Can there be a greater good in the world deſired, then that Gods face ſhould be pleaſant to us? Then that he ſhould become reconciled with us? For as it is better to undergo all the wrath of all the moſt cruel Tyrants in the world, then to lye under Gods diſpleaſure; ſo it is better to enjoy the favour and love of God, then the advantage of all ſecond Cauſes. *Gen* 4.14 *Cain* ſpeaks of this as the height of his miſery, That he ſhould be *hid from the face of the Lord.* To be in Hell, it would not be a torment, but becauſe Gods *face* is *hid.* Whereſoever God hideth his face, there is the inlet of all woe and miſery. Then on the contrary, when the *face* of God doth *ſhine* upon a Believer, as *David* prayeth for this often, then is that mans eſtate *bleſſed* and *happy*: God is then at peace with him: God is then reconciled. Now as the Apoſtle argueth, *Rom.* 8. *If God be for us, who ſhall be againſt us?* When the Sunne ſhineth, there may ariſe many black and thick clouds, there may be ſad and gloomy daies; but when the face of God doth ſhine on his children, then no darkneſſe, no tempeſts, no ſad temptations whatſoever, can hinder a man from having the beautifull beames of Gods favour. He can make the Sunne ſhine in the dark night. If he giveth peace, none can hinder it.

Thirdly, *This phraſe doth imply the original, and cauſe of all Gods gracious mercies in time.* It's becauſe of the light of his countenance, that any good cometh to us. For as the damned in Hell, who are totally caſt out from his face, cannot receive ſo much as a drop of water; ſo on the other ſide, where the favour of God is towards a man, there is a Treaſure of all the goodneſſe he can deſire. Therefore when *David* prayeth here, he doth (as I may ſo ſay) ask the whole *Kingdom of God*: Have this, and have *all*, if it be neceſſary for us. When *David* prayeth for the *light of Gods countenance*, he doth not ask for a ſingle mercy: It is not for one particular comfort he beggeth, but for the Treaſury: To have this, is to have the Ocean, not ſtreames: To have this, is to have the Mine, not ſome fragments of gold. Oh then, is it any wonder if this light of Gods favour be thus to be preferred, ſeeing it's the Treaſury of all the comforts we have! God then ſaith, *Ask of me, though it be to the whole Kingdom, yet I will not deny thee.* I mean in this ſenſe; That there is not one mercy in all Gods Store-houſe; there is no choice dainty in his Cellars, but thou haſt the Key to open it, when thou pleaſeſt.

For in the fourth place, *This phraſe doth imply, That God hath a peculiar reſpect unto his Children*: That he regardeth them with a more ſpecial favour then all the world. For the face of God, to ſpeak after the manner of men, is over the whole world: There is nothing hid from it. But then this ſhining of his face; this propitious and extraordinary favour, it's only to thoſe that are his: All the people of God, they are his favourites. And as *Pharaoh* regarded *Joſeph* in a farre other manner, then he did his other Subjects, he makes all the Land to be his. Thus doth God to his own Children; He giveth them Heaven and Earth; He makes them Heires of all the glorious Promiſes that are made in the Goſpel. So that Gods face towards them, is in an extraordinary manner: It denoteth a peculiar reſpect to them. Hence it is, that they have liberty to come with boldneſſe unto him: They have the ſecrets of God manifeſted unto them. Theſe are admitted into the *holieſt of holies*, whereas others are commanded to be in the outward Court only.

Fifthly, *This phraſe of the light of Gods countenance upon a man, implyeth the Efficacy*

Efficacy and powerfull Effects thereof. For as the Sunne by its beames doth enlighten the whole earth, and gives life and motion to every thing; thus alſo doth God where he favours. Where he is pleaſed, there he doth communicate all thoſe neceſſary and precious comforts, which he vouchſafeth unto his Children. *None ever ſeeketh the face of God in vain.* It's *not a vain thing*, to have the *favour of God*: For, his *love* is *active*; and he doth *communicate* himſelf unto ſuch, to the greateſt of their *expectations*. Whence is it, that God in time doth *ſanctify* his people, doth *juſtifie* them, doth *pardon ſinne*, and *heal* their *corruptions?* Is not all *this*, becauſe his *countenance ſhineth upon them?* Well therefore may *David* pray for this above all earthly advantages whatſoever: For, if he doth enjoy the face of God, then there cannot any thing be denyed him. It's from this, that he may preſſe for *forgiveneſſe*, for *holineſſe*: It's from this, that he may importune for any ſpiritual benefit he ſtands in need of. As ſhe ſaid, *If thou loveſt me, how canſt thou deny this, and that to me?* So, if thou loveſt me, if thy face be towards me, why is this or that mercy denyed unto me? If I have the Sunne, how cometh that to withhold its beames from me? And indeed, this is mainly intended in Prayer, that it ſhould be the *light of his countenance acting*, and *operating*: That it ſhould be *putting* it ſelf *forth* upon his *ſoul*.

Sixthly, *This acting of Gods face in reference to the godly, emptyeth it ſelf two waies.*

Firſt, In reſpect of *outward and temporal mercies.* It's from this favour of God, that his people have any outward comfort in mercy towards them. For although wicked and ungodly men, they may have abundance of theſe outward things, yet it doth not come from Gods loving kindneſſe to them: They have them in his anger, and they uſe them to their own perdition. But it's not thus with the godly; Every mercy, though never ſo little, comes from the *light of his face* towards them. So that though they have never ſo little, if they have no more then *Lazarus* crums; yea, they cannot get them; yet they are better then thoſe who have the greateſt portions of the world: for theſe have the *favour of God* with it. Which made *David* ſay, *A little that the righteous hath, is better then great abundance of the wicked.* In this conſideration, as well as in others, that he hath it with the peace and favour of God, he is the child, and the friend of God, in all this. If he ſaid, he did not rejoyce ſo much *in Dono quam ab te dato.* This is much more applicable to the people of God; What they have they do not ſo much rejoyce in it, as that it cometh from the favour of God.

Again, The light of Gods countenance, ſheweth it ſelf in *ſpiritual mercies*: And theſe are a certain and ſure effect, demonſtrating of it. Whoſoever can find the leaſt degree of Gods grace in his heart, that hath the experience of any humiliation for ſinne, of any heavenly-mindedneſſe; though theſe things are but ſmoaking, yet he may conclude that the *light of Gods countenance is lifted up upon him.* Oh then, whoſoever thou art, that findeſt grace in thy ſoul, rejoyce not ſo much in that, as of what it is a ſign of, what it doth ſo palpably demonſtrate! Alas, even our very graces, as they are inherent in us, can afford us little comfort in themſelves; for they are ſubject to many imperfections and weakneſſes: We have many ſighes and diſcouragements becauſe of them. Only as they are Evidences and Demonſtrations of Gods favour, that from them we may certainly conclude, the *face of God ſhineth upon us*: So they afford *unſpeakable joy.* And therefore this is one reaſon, why a man may more rejoyce in the leaſt degree of grace diſcovered in himſelf, then in the greateſt outward mercies whatſoever. For we may have the wealth of *Solomon*, the long life of *Methuſalem*, and yet for all that, have not the leaſt of Gods loving kindneſſe to us. But on the other ſide, though afflicted, though perſecuted, though oppoſed, though ſhut up in dark dungeons; yet the diſcovery of grace within us,

doth

doth make us to conclude, that the *gracious eye of God is upon us.* So then, it's the *light of Gods countenance,* that is the *efficacious cauſe* of all the *mercies* we do *enjoy.* As Chriſt, when he *looked* upon *Peter,* that made him *go out, and weep bitterly.* Thus it's Gods gracious eying and looking upon us, that makes us go forth into any expreſſion of grace.

Seventhly, *This phraſe of the light of Gods countenance ſhining upon a man, doth imply, the notice and knowledge of this:* For ſo Gods *light* is often called that *knowledge* which he giveth of him. And indeed, though the *face* of God do *ſhine* upon a man, yet if he be blind, or in ſad darkneſſe of heart, that he is not able to behold it; then it's all one to him, as if it did not ſhine at all. So that *David* prayeth, *that he might have the knowledge and ſenſe of this upon the ſoul. Solomon* ſaith, *Light is ſweet, but it is to thoſe that do behold it.* The darkeſt night, and day, are all one to a blind man. And thus now, when a godly man ſits in darkneſſe, and hath no light which he perceiveth, he cannot but be greatly dejected. So it is here; when the favour of God is not apprehended, but we rather apprehend his frowns and anger againſt us, then, though we be *Children of light,* yet *We walk in darkneſſe. David* doth often pray, that Gods *face might ſhine upon him;* and yet even then it did ſhine upon him, while he prayed for it: otherwiſe he could not have had a praying heart, neither could he be ſenſible of the want of it: But he wanted the *knowledge* and the *aſſurance* of it. So that although it be Gods gracious favour that puts us into a ſtate of bleſſedneſſe, yet it is the *aſſurance* of it, that makes us to rejoyce in it. When *David* had more joy and gladneſſe in his heart, then all the voluptuous and earthly men of the world, yet this could not be, without the aſſurance of Gods favour. So that Gods gracious love, is better then the whole world. It is that which preſerveth from ſinne and hell; It is that which keepeth off all condemnation: But yet all the while, till we know this, our ſouls may conflict with ſad agonies. And this is the caſe of all the people of God, who are in ſad temptations, and lye under heavy deſections. For theſe, though under the favour of God, yet not being aſſured of it, apprehend God as an angry Judge, continually againſt their ſouls.

Laſtly, *Where the light of Gods countenance is, there is implyed the love and delight the Lord takes in ſuch.* The eyes of the Lord, are often ſaid to be on the godly, as being a *pleaſant* and *delightfull* Object: He is never willing to turn his face from them. It is true indeed, there may be ſuch a time with the godly, they may either walk ſo negligently, or commit ſuch grievous ſinnes, that God may for a *While turn his face from them,* but yet this will *not be for ever*: God he will bring them to *repentance,* to *ſelf-abhorrency*; ſo that they ſhall with the Prodigall, be *brought to ſee his face again.* But the conſtant courſe of a godly man being to *love God, and to avoid all ſinne,* hence it is, that the waies of the *upright are pleaſing to the Lord,* and his gracious eye is alwaies upon them. *Protection, direction, ſanctification, preſervation,* all theſe are daily communicated unto them. What great encouragement is the Fathers eye to his Child, the Commanders to a Souldier? but how much more ſhould the *light of Gods countenance put life into us?*

The Qualifications or Characters of thoſe who do value and deſire Gods favour above all things elſe.

Having diſcuſſed what is comprehended in that expreſſion of *Gods lifting up his countenance upon a man*, I ſhall now proceed to give ſuch *Qualifications or Characters, that are neceſſeary to ſuch who do earneſtly deſire Gods favour.* And

Firſt, *They are ſuch who have a deep and true ſenſe of the guilt of their ſinne*; who are wounded in heart, and lye under their iniquities, as their greateſt burden. Such as have this foundation laid, they cannot have any reſt or quietneſſe; nothing can ſatisfie their ſouls, till God look graciouſly upon them. We ſee this in *David*, *Pſal.*32. & 51. there, when he lay groaning under the weight of his ſinnes, and was ready to *roar out* becauſe of Gods anger; What is it that he ſo earneſtly begs for, but that *ſinne may be covered, that joy might be reſtored to him?* That God would take away thoſe ſinnes, which make ſuch a ſad diſtance between him and his ſoul. Now *David* had many earthly and worldly refuges to fly unto; he might have ſolaced himſelf with all kind of comforts; but nothing could quiet his heart, if he hath not Gods favour. As all the Starres, though they ſhine together, are not able to diſpell the darkneſſe of the night, it muſt be the light of the Sunne that can do that: Thus, it is not any creature, any comfort, any content from them, that can quiet and compoſe the troubled ſoul; it muſt be the *light of Gods favour* ſhining into their dark hearts. If therefore you ask, What is the reaſon why ſo many crave earthly things, but as for this favour of God, they prize it not; they pray not, or wreſtle for it? The anſwer is, Moſt men are ſecure in their ſinnes; they have hardneſſe of heart, and a ſpiritual ſtupidity upon them. Hence it is, that they know not what *ſtings* are in ſinne; they know not what a *wounded ſpirit* meanes: They have never been in the Whales belly, (as it were) nor in the deep waters of the ſoul, feeling themſelves ready to fall into Hell and damnation; therefore it is that they judge all is well enough. This full ſtomack needeth not the Honey-combe. Oh then, till ſinne be more bitter in thy conſcience, the favour of God cannot be eſteemed by thee!

Secondly, *Such as eſteem the light of Gods countenance, are many times thoſe that are afflicted, perſecuted, and of great exerciſes in this world.* For this is the wretched corruption of our natures, that while we can take any delight in the creature, we runne not out to God: While we can have but the light of a candle, we care not for the Sunne. Therefore it is, that God takes from us all our comforts. He removeth this mercy, and that mercy, that ſo we may ſeek after God. Thus God ſaith, *Hoſ.*5.15. he would *go from them*, they ſhould *not have the mercies they uſed to have*: But to what end doth God this? *That they may ſeek to him early in their affliction.* As Children, while there is any day, they love to be playing and ſporting, and will not come home till the dark night drive them. Thoſe then that are often afflicted and chaſtened, commonly ſuch do highly regard the face of God. Thus the Church of God (*Pſal.*80.3.) being in great extremities, God feeding them with the bread of teares, and giving them teares to drink in great meaſure; yea, angry with their very Prayers: What doth it beſeech for in this great ſtraight? Verſe 3. *Turn us again, and cauſe thy face to ſhine upon us, and we ſhall be ſaved.* As the Sun is moſt eſteemed after

after ſad, black, and gloomy weather: Thus is the ſavour of God moſt regarded, when we find troubles to compaſſe us about on every ſide. Hence it is, that thoſe whom *God loveth, he often chaſtens.* And nothing is more unhappy, then conſtant happineſſe; becauſe abundance and fulneſſe of outward mercies, doth take us from ſeeking the face of God. Let not then the godly mourn away under any chaſtiſements they lye under; for if theſe are ſo ſanctified, that thereby the favour of God is more indeared to thee, thereby thou canſt rejoyce in his preſence more, theſe are the greateſt mercies that can befall thee. And indeed, at ſuch times the light of Gods countenance is more neceſſary then ever. The leſſe of the creature, the more need to be filled with God.

Thirdly, *Thoſe can only deſire the light of Gods countenance, that do renounce their own righteouſneſſe*: That do not juſtifie themſelves, or put confidence in their own righteouſneſſe. Commonly there are none more ignorant and ſtupid about this glorious priviledge, then the civil, phariſaical and formal men, who placeth all their truſt, in the good works they do. Thoſe affections, and that hope, which ſhould be placed on God, they are apt to put upon their own ſeeming righteouſneſſe. Hence (*Mat.* 5. 3.) our Saviour pronounceth thoſe *bleſſed, that are poor in ſpirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* And the Virgin *Mary* magnifieth God in her Song, *Luk.* 1. 53. *He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath ſent empty away.* Not only the prophane man, who trampleth this Pearl under his feet, but even the formall civil man is a great ſtranger to this petition. This favour is wholly a ſtrange thing to him, and all becauſe he is full of himſelf: He makes his good heart, his good workes, a god, a ſaviour to him; and ſo no wonder if he ſeek not up to Heaven, and deſire light from thence. Yea, in godly men it is thus, that the more debaſed and ſelf emptyed they are, the more is their fellowſhip with God: The more do they place their happineſſe in beholding of him. As you ſee it was with *Paul*, Who laboured more then he? yet, Who undervaluing all his graces more then he? And all this was; that Chriſt might be wholly exalted. Oh then know, that there is nothing doth ſo much bolt out this glorious light from ſhining into thee, as ſelf-confidence, as ſelf-righteouſneſſe. And this is the reaſon why God doth ſo many times withdraw his gracious preſence from his own Children, that they are in the dark, and cannot ſee any grace, and the leaſt ſpark of heavenly fire within themſelves; and all, becauſe they are apt to be lifted up. They muſt have theſe thornes in the fleſh, elſe they would depend too much upon their own ſtrength, and their own graces. And when they have been thus humbled, then at laſt they come to eſteem Gods favour more then ever; as *Paul's* paſſengers, after a ſtormy black time, rejoyced to ſee the Sun, more then ever.

Fourthly, *Such only can eſteem the light of Gods countenance, who are a ſpiritual and an heavenly people, who have the holy Image of God repaired in them.* He that is of the *earth, is earthly, and ſpeaks earthly things,* (Joh. 3.) *but he that is of Heaven, is heavenly.* Such as we are in reſpect of our ſpiritual conſtitution, ſuch are our operations, and our inclinations. No wonder then, the natural man deſireth not the favour of God; for he is in a corrupt and ſinfull eſtate, and ſo can deſire nothing but what is ſuitable thereunto. Whereas on the other ſide, he that is made heavenly, he that hath an holy frame of heart, the motions of his ſoul aſcend upwards ſtill. As you ſee by *David*, How often doth he profeſſe the breathings, the longings and thirſtings of his ſoul after God? He cryeth aloud, that he hath *nothing in Heaven and Earth, but God*: He makes *God* his *Portion*, his *Shepherd*, his *Refuge*, his *Hope*, his *all* things unto him. Whence is *David* thus carried out to the favour of God, but becauſe of an heavenly heart within? There could not come ſuch ſweet fragrant ſmells, but becauſe his heart was like a ſpiritual Garden. You ſee all like, deſireth and delights in that which is like:

like: And if a godly man love to ſee the face, and have the company of another godly man, how much more muſt he deſire God himſelf? Oh then, complain of that heavy, lumpiſh, earthly heart of thine! that doth not often ſay, *My heart breaketh for the longing after God at all times. As the Hart deſireth the waters, ſo pants my ſoul after thee, O God.* If thou complaineſt that thou haſt affections for every thing but God, thy heart is taken with every comfort but him: Oh, bewail this dull and ſinfull frame! Thou wanteſt heavenlyneſſe; Thy heart and converſation is not in Heaven.

Fifthly, *Such only pray for the light of Gods countenance, as live by Faith, and are affected with things, as revealed by the Scripture.* It's as impoſſible for a man, living wholly by ſenſe, and upon worldly Principles, to rejoyce in the the favour of God, as a worm that crawleth on the ground, to delight in the Sunne. Faith is that noble grace, which is like Wings to the ſoul, to make it fly up to Heaven. We ſee it in *Paul*: What was that which ſo *raiſed up* his *heart* to Chriſt? What is that which made him to *ſit with Chriſt in heavenly places?* What is that which is the *ſubſtance of things hoped for*, to every Believer, but *Faith*? We are all lame cripples, till Faith heal us. And this is the reaſon why all worldly men have no more ſenſe of this divine Benefit, then the very bruit beaſts, becauſe they are wholly ſtrangers to the life of Faith. For it's not the bodily eye, that can ſee the face of God; neither hath God any bodily face or eyes, but theſe things are wholly ſpiritual. And therefore, as the deaf ear cannot be affected with melodious muſick; ſo neither can a natural heart diſcern of this light of Gods favour. Oh then, acquaint thy ſelf with Faith! This is a Proſpective-Glaſſe, that will diſcover ſuch Objects to thee, that of thy ſelf thou couldſt not apprehend. Faith makes us to behold the glory of Gods favour: We are ſtarke blind, till Faith open our eyes.

Sixthly, *Such only can eſteem the favour of God, who have had the experience of the ſweetneſſe and excellency of it.* A man that hath not taſted Honey, knoweth not how ſweet it is. Therefore *David* calls upon the men of the world, to *taſte and ſee how good God is.* If the natural man ever had any experimentall feeling of Gods favour, and his love, then he would quickly have another heart, be of another mind: Then he would ſell all to get this Pearl. But all the while men are unregenerate, they know no other good then that of the creature: It hath never entred into their hearts, to conceive what it is to have the face of God ſhine upon his people. Inſomuch, that all the invitations and allurements are in vain, untill God be pleaſed to come into the ſoul, and diſcover his ſweetneſſe, and conſolations to him. The experienced Chriſtian, that hath often drank of this Wine, ſtill remains thirſty, and deſirous after more. For whereas the having of earthly things doth ſatiate, and at laſt nauſeate a mans heart, ſo that he hath enough; in this heavenly enjoyment of God, he never hath enough, but the more he hath taſted of it, the more hungery he is ſtill: Alwaies praying with *David*, *Oh, when will he come to me!* When thoſe in the *Canticles* asked the Church, which was ſo raviſhed with Chriſt, preferring him above ten thouſand, *What is thy beloved more then others?* it was an Argument they had never ſeen him; they had never known him: If they had, they would have been enammoured with him, as well as the Church. And thus, when natural men wonder, ſaying, Why do theſe men thus pray, thus mourn, thus long after God? Why is it that they are never ſatisfied, but in him? It's a demonſtration, that this experimentall work hath never been upon thy heart: If it had, the ſpirit of Propheſie (as I may ſo ſay) would fall on thee alſo: Thou wouldſt admire the favour of God, as well as they.

Seventhly, *Such only can deſire the light of Gods countenance, who have the Spirit of God working in them*: It's that which maketh the ſoul go upwards. We

being like that man, bowed down, that Chriſt healed, till the Spirit of God thus raiſe us up. *The holy Ghoſt came down in fire*, which denoteh the activty of it. When fire aſſimilateth any thing into it ſelf, it makes it aſcend upwards: And thus, when the Spirit of God converts and ſanctifieth a mans ſoul, it giveth it a contrary motion to what it had before. Then it made proviſion for the fleſh, then it minded earthly things; but now the Spirit of God hath raiſed it from the death of ſinne. That as you ſee *it's the mighty power of God*, which will make theſe *bodies*, that are now *corruptible*, heavy, and preſſing *downwards*, to be *immortal*, *ſpiritual*, and ſo *agile*, that they ſhall *meet the Lord in the aire*: Even theſe bodies will be ſo transformed, that they ſhall move in the air like Birds. No wonder then, if Gods Spirit is able ſo to work upon our hearts, that they ſhall be conſtantly inclining to God. And indeed, none are to reſt, till they find God thus mightily prevailing upon them. This excellent frame, may be *given by the Spirit*, and the *Spirit is promiſed to ſuch as ask for it*, Mat. 6. Eſpecially, the Spirit of God, as *adopting*, *enabeling us to call God Father*, *rebuking legall ſlaviſh feares*, *and filling us with a filial and evangelical frame of heart.*

Eighthly, *Therefore another Property of ſuch, who do thus highly eſteem Gods favour, is, That they are diligent in Prayer, and fervent in approaches to God.* Prayer is the aſcending of the heart to God, who is in Heaven. The eyes lifted up, argue what the heart ſhould be. Now Prayer is of this excellent advantage, if ſpiritually and fervently performed, that it carrieth up the ſoul to God, and thereby God alſo manifeſts his loving kindneſſe to his people. Even as *Moſes*, upon his Communion with God, had his face *ſhine* ſo gloriouſly, that the people could *not behold it*; and Chriſt himſelf, upon Prayer, had his *countenance changed*, that his *face did ſhine like the Sunne*, and his *garments were White as ſnow.* So that ſuch who eſteem of Gods favour, they are inſtant in Prayer. They perform that duty with watching and attending thereunto; which if ſo diſcharged, then many conſolations, many irradiations of his favour, are communicated to them. So that a man diligent in Prayer, is like the *tree by the water ſide, whoſe leafe will never fade.* Hence we have that encouragement, *No man ſeeketh Gods face in vain*: And no ſooner did God command this, but immediately *David*'s heart yeelded to it, *Pſal.* 7.8. *Thy face Lord will I ſeek.* We cannot have it, without ſeeking for it; as that which is moſt precious, and a very infinite Treaſure. And withall, you ſee the encouragement, God beſpeaks it; he ſaith, *Seek ye my face.*

Laſtly, *Such as prize the light of Gods countenance, they walk cloſely with God, and keep up ſtrict Communion with him.* Slothfull and careleſſe walking, will never be bleſſed, with this glorious advantage. You read, the Church was but once careleſſe and negligent, when Chriſt proffered himſelf, and immediately Chriſt withdraweth: ſo that though ſhe runne up and down much perplexed, to ſee the face of her *Beloved* again, yet it coſt her dear, ere ſhe could obtain it. *David* began to have but ſome proud and preſumptuous *thoughts*, *Pſal.* 301. 7. *And God hid his face, and then he was troubled.* You ſee, a little thing, a *word*, a *thought may do it.* Therefore thoſe, who deſire to enjoy it, they walk circumſpectly, leſt they ſhould do any thing, that may make him angry with them.

Uſe 1. *Of Exhortation to Gods Children*, To keep up a tender mollified heart; to take no reſt till the light of Gods countenance ſhine upon thee. Let not luſts, paſſions, or any thing be an eclipſe between this glorious Sunne and you. How can you live without this? May not the Devil come with ſeven more tormenting Devils then ever, if thou provoke God to withdraw his gracious preſence? To whom are woes? To whom are ſad

terrours

terrours and perplexities of ſpirit? but to ſuch who cry out, God frowneth on them. Oh, they feel his anger conſuming of them!

Uſe 2. *Of Admonition, to natural and unregenerate men*, To know there is a better good then ever yet they taſted. Oh that thou couldſt deſire God, as thou doeſt wealth and pleaſures! Is not the pleaſant ſmiling face of ſome great Potentate, a reviving to thee? What endeavours for the favour of a great man, who yet is mortal? Will not this condemn thee at the Day of Judgment? Oh, how will the face of God be then eſteemed of!

A Conſideration of ſome falſe Grounds, of a Perſwaſion of Gods Love.

We have declared already the Characters of ſuch who can truly eſteem the light of Gods favour; let us now conſider *the condition of ſuch who are miſtaken herein, and take that for Gods favour which is not.* And

Firſt, *There is the rich, earthly, or great man of the World.* He who aboundeth in all Proſperity, and needeth nothing, this man thinketh that Gods face is towards him in mercy. They gather from all the mercies they enjoy, that therefore God loveth them, but this is a very dangerous miſtake. For I. Riches.

1. In the Scripture, we read, That *chaſtiſements and afflictions, are ſometimes an argument of Gods love*, and that God is *never more angry*, then when he lets a mans waies be *ſmooth*, and *proſperous*: As it was with *Moab*, becauſe he was not *moved* often, therefore he was *ſetled upon the Lees.* And thus in *Hoſea*, when God is angry in the higheſt manner, then he threatens, *He will not puniſh their ſonnes or daughters any more*, Hoſ. 4. 14. They therefore have little cauſe to boaſt in this, That they are not afflicted as other men; they are not in ſuch bonds as others are: For *David* (*Pſal.* 73. 6.) did of old obſerve this, That whereas the wicked of the world, had all *encouragements*, they had all *temporal increaſe*, yet the godly were *bowed down all the day long*; and that in thoſe times when Promiſes of temporal abundance were in a larger way propoſed to them. If then the godly man had this meaſure in the Old Teſtamant, no wonder if he meet with it much more in the New Teſtament; where tribulations are made the Red Sea to go through, into the Land of *Canaan.* Hence the Apoſtle doth directly argue from Gods *love*, to *chaſtiſements*, *Heb.* 12. 6. which is again mentioned, *Rom.* 3. 19. Inſomuch, that thou who art never afflicted, haſt greater cauſe to fear leſt Gods wrath be upon thee. The Phyſician adminiſters no Phyſick to ſuch who are incurable. Oh the wonderfull and bleſſed effects which the godly find by afflictions, when ſanctified! Doth not *David* ſay, *Before he was afflicted, he went aſtray*, Pſal. 119. 67? 2.

2. If it ſhould be granted, that theſe temporal mercies thou aboundeſt with, come from the light of his countenance, *yet it is only in temporal things.* If we do ſuppoſe that they come from Gods love to thee, yet this is but a common and general love: It doth not at all make to thy peculiar happineſſe, neither doth it tend to the ſpecial favour of God. It may not be denied, but God from a common love to men, who have been juſt and diligent in their waies, may beſtow ſome outward mercies, as a temporal reward. Thus *Auſtin* thought the *Romanes* had that great Dominion given them, becauſe of their juſtice. And ſo the Scripture ſaith, *A diligent hand maketh rich*, Prov. 10. 4. But what is this common love with-

out a ſpecial? What is it for God ſo to love thee, as to make thee ſtrong, healthy, wealthy, and not to give Chriſt and Heaven to thee? Oh, therefore reſt not in the enjoying of theſe outward mercies, but look to that which is the chiefeſt of all! If thou haſt grace, pardon of ſinne, and Chriſt, thou canſt not be damned; but if thou have the great things of this world, thou maieſt have alſo the great torments of Hell hereafter. As *Iſmael* had of *Abraham*, ſome rich gifts, but not the Inheritance: As *Luther* ſaid, of the great Turkiſh Empire, which God hath given to wicked and ungodly men, it's but *mica canis*, a crum that the dog may have, but not the Childrens Bread.

3. 3. Let it be given to wicked men thus, from a common love, *yet it is withall from Gods anger and hatred*, if you do regard them in a ſpiritual conſideration. For, they are not ſanctified to them; they are not thereby made more holy, or drawn nearer to God. They do become ſnares and occaſions of ſinnes to them: ſo that they will at the Day of Judgment, even curſe the day that ever they had ſuch abundance. They will cry out, Oh that they had been poor, miſerable, deformed! That they had been under any calamity, then that they had ſuch abundance; for that hath made Hell ſeven times hotter: That hath been like oyl poured into the flame, which hath made the fire burn more terribly. That which *Solomon* obſerved of wealth, (*Eccl.*5.13.) is true of all other outward mercies, Beauty, Strength, Honours; *How often are they given to the hurt of them that have them?* Thus *David*'s imprecation is fulfilled in them, *Let their Table become a ſnare unto them.* As too much blood indangers the body: eſpecially theſe outward mercies, are ſure to be a ſnare to them; becauſe they hinder and oppoſe all thoſe Chriſtian Qualifications which are abſolutely neceſſary to every Diſciple of Chriſt. Thus it's required, that a man muſt *love Chriſt more then Father or Mother, or life it ſelf*; that he muſt *deny himſelf, and take up his Croſſe.* All which cannot be, becauſe of immoderate love to theſe outward mercies. This is the *Camels bunch*; This is that which *choakes the Word.* The Phariſees, becauſe they were covetous, derided Chriſt. If then, you comfort your ſelves, becauſe God hath given you all outward fulneſſe; examine how theſe are ſanctified to you. What ſpirituall effects do theſe mercies bring upon you? Do you not pray the worſe, hear the worſe? Are not your hearts the more diſtracted and divided? Doth not the earth make you forget Heaven? Oh then, be afraid and tremble at theſe things, rather then confidently rejoyce in them! Did not *Abraham* tell *Dives*, *He had received good things in this life?* but for eternity, he was not to receive ſo much, as *a drop of water.* Pray unto God, that all thy good things be not given thee here, and thou have nothing hereafter.

II. An untroubled Conſcience, is no Argument of Gods countenance.

A ſecond ſort of perſons, *who miſtake about the light of Gods countenance, is, Such who have a quiet, untroubled, and eaſed Conſcience.* They commonly argue thus; God loveth them, for they have no trouble in their hearts; they have no fear or diſquietneſſe in their ſouls, but they put their whole truſt in Chriſt. Such as theſe, that die as a Lamb, (ſo people expreſſe it) they make no doubt but this is the favour of God. They thank God, God loveth them, and they love God: They never doubted of Gods love to them: They are fully aſſured of it. Thus they take a ſecure, and ſometimes a feared conſcience, for that which is quieted, and made peaceable through the blood of Chriſt. And this is the condition of very many; they do even rejoyce in this, That they never doubted. They think, the godly, who have often fears and doubts, who are in ſad temptations, to be the worſt of men; and that it is for their wickedneſſe

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they are ſo. Even as the wicked thought Chriſt to be ſmitten for his own ſinnes; and that God did in ſuch a peculiar manner, bring him to that accurſed death, for his high impiety. Thus do the prophane men of the world, cenſure the generation of the godly, who have many times ſad dejections of ſpirit, and walk without any ſenſe of Gods favour at all: yea, ready to cry out, They are damned, and that *God hath forſaken them.*

But to ſearch into the bottom of this Diſeaſe, which is Epidemicall:

First, Conſider, *There is a great difference between a ſtupid ſenſleſſe conſcience, and a ſerene conſcience made ſo by the light of Gods countenance ſhining upon it.* This is not a quieted conſcience by the Promiſe, and through Chriſt, but a ſtupified one; which the Apoſtle calls a *ſeared* one, that cannot *feel*; that cannot apprehend. It is with thee as mad men, that conceit ſuch and ſuch great things to themſelves, when (alas) it's for want of their wits and ſobriety, that they have ſuch fooliſh imaginations. Thus when thou preſumeſt of Heaven, and ſalvation: Oh thou art ſure thou ſhalt go thither! Whence is all this, but becauſe thou haſt no ſpiritual life or feeling within thee? Oh, if thou wert in thy ſpiritual ſenſes; if thou didſt underſtand aright, thou wouldſt quickly cry out, and tremble at that curſed condition thou art in! Who were more abominable to God then the Phariſees, yet who juſtified themſelves more? Who put more truſt and confidence in the workes they did? Therefore do thou ſearch into thy heart more. Whence comeſt thou to be thus ſecure and confident? Is it not becauſe thou art delivered up to a *reprobate ſenſe?* Is it not becauſe thou art *dead in ſinne?* And as dead men cannot feel any pain or torment, ſo neither canſt thou. *Therefore if you ſee men that lived wickedly, yet die peaceably and confidently, this is not the light of Gods favour upon them; it is their ſenſleſneſſe; It's their ſtupidity.* You cannot ſee a more miſerable object then ſuch are.

1. An untroubled Conſcience, may be a ſtupid ſeared Conſcience.

Secondly, This quiet and comfortable conſcience they boaſt of, is not from the light of Gods countenance, *becauſe it's for the moſt part accompanied with many groſſe and wicked ſinnes.* As it was with the Jews, though they committed ſuch abominable practiſes, that even the light of nature did condemn, yet they will come and cry, *The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord.* For this the Prophets of old had ſuch great Controverſies with the people, that though they gave themſelves up to all kind of wickedneſſe, yet they would ſtay themſelves upon God; and like the whoriſh woman, would wipe the lip, and be as confident as if they had done no evil thing. Oh then, let ſuch be awakened out of their ſpiritual madneſſe! What? Thou an enemy to God, by all the prophaneneſſe thou art in all the day long? Doeſt thou come boldly to God? Doeſt thou ſay thou putteſt thy truſt in him? Remember, that *God is a conſuming fire to ſuch as thou art.* It's not for thee to caſt thy eye upon the Promiſe as yet, but upon the terrours and threatnings of the Law: It's for thee to hearken and hear how the Law curſeth thee: That abroad and at home, thou art under the condemnation of it. Conclude therefore this to thy ſelf, that all the confidence thou haſt in Gods mercy, if accompanied with a prophane and impenitent life, is but a rotten poſt; which though it ſhine in a dark night, yet when the Sunne ariſeth, it is diſcovered what it is. The Apoſtle *John* ſpeakes terribly to this, 1 *Joh.* 3.20. *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our heart, and he knoweth all things.* If then, thy own natural conſcience accuſe thee for ſuch and ſuch miſcarriages, know that God who is omniſcient, he knoweth more evil by thee, and will much more condemn thee.

2. And may be accompanied with groſſe ſinnes.

Thirdly,

3. And without taking Gods way for the obtaining and preſerving of it.

Thirdly, This quieted heart is thus lulled aſleep, *becauſe it hath not taken Gods way, either to obtain or preſerve quietneſſe.* For the light of Gods countenance is not like the light of the Sunne, which *ſhineth upon the juſt and unjuſt*, and cometh upon all men; even the Thief and the Adulterer, he hath this light of the Sunne to accompliſh all his wickedneſſe: but the light of Gods favour is with much difficulty obtained, and with as much difficulty preſerved. For in the obtaining of the light of Gods favour, there muſt be a neceſſary Humiliation for ſinne, and ſenſe of our utter periſhing in our ſelves. *Come unto me, ye that are heavy laden,* (ſaith Chriſt) *and you ſhall find reſt for your ſouls.* And thus the *poor in ſpirit*, (*Mat.* 5.) they are called *bleſſed*. How did *Paul* come to triumph ſo confidently in the *love of God through Chriſt?* Was not this foundation firſt laid, that (*Rom.* 7.) he perceived the *Law to be a killing Meſſenger to him?* He *ſaw, that made ſinne out of meaſure ſinfull.* And thus being *undone in himſelf*, he is directed to eſteem highly of the *grace of Chriſt*. So that there is a vaſt difference between *Paul's* confidence and good perſwaſion, while a Phariſee, and when converted: For while a Phariſee, he was very zealous, and ſaith, *He had a good conſcience*; he did *not walk againſt the checks of that*; he had much *comfort* and *conſolation*, in purſuing theſe dictates: But when converted, he cryeth out of all theſe; he was a *Blaſphemer*, a *Perſecuter* the *greateſt of all ſinners*. And thus it will be with thee; Thou goeſt on in thy way with all preſumption; thou purſueſt thy ſuperſtitions, thy will-worſhip, and haſt unſpeakable content in thy conſcience for doing thus. But oh, when God ſhall ſhake the foundations of thy ſoul! when he ſhall diſcover thy very originals, then thy ſoul will be in wofull agonies; then the very rottenneſſe of all will begin to appear within thee. The light of Gods countenance: comes after trouble for ſinne. God is known by this property, (*2 Cor.* 1.) *That he bringeth light out of darkneſſe, even at firſt, out of a Chaos he made light.* Thus it is here; From the confuſions and diſorders of the ſoul, becauſe of ſinne, there ariſeth afterwards the greateſt tranquility of ſpirit. It's true, this trouble about ſinne, is in ſome more, in ſome leſſe; but yet there is an abſolute neceſſity of feeling ſinne ſo farre a burden, that it findeth it ſelf eternally periſhing without this. Again, for the Introduction of this light into the ſoul, there muſt not only be a deep ſenſe of ſinne as a burden, but earneſt hungerings and longings after the righteouſneſſe revealed by the Goſpel. *Judas* and *Cain* felt the burden of their ſinnes upon them; they had weight more then they could bear, but they deſpair under this; they have no breathings and deſires after the grace of God. Now Chriſt will not vouchſafe this precious Pearl to ſwine that trample it under their feet; That they ſhall have it, who care not for it. But the ſoul is prepared by many inlargements and ſtrong deſires; Oh, that I might have but a glimpſe of this light! Oh, that I had but a drop to coole, not the tongue, but the whole ſoul, that is ſcorched with the guilt of ſinne! Go then, and conſider thy ſelf; Thou ſpeakeſt much of Gods favour, but hath thy ſoul been in agonies; in breaking of heart for it? Never did a man, weary of the night, more deſire to ſee the day, then thou doeſt the gracious light of his countenance to thee? If upon theſe termes ſalvation hath come to thy Houſe, then there is ſome hope. As the light of God is thus obtained at firſt, ſo it's with no leſſe difficulty preſerved. For

Cauſes of the eclipſe of Gods face to the godly.

1. *Formal and negligent profeſſion of our love to God*, will cauſe a dark night to ariſe. Though thou doeſt not prove a direct Apoſtate; though thou doeſt not give over all praying, and all duties, but keepeſt up the form

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form of them in thy Family, and in the Publique; yet this dulneſſe will Eclipſe the favour of God. The Church in the *Canticles*, ſhe did not forſake Chriſt her Beloved; ſhe did not become an Adultereſſe, and ſeek out another Husband, only ſhe was lazy and negligent, when Chriſt knocked at the door: And this only was the cauſe of ſo much ſadneſſe to her afterwards.

2. *Even the diſtempers of the heart within*, though not breaking forth into groſſe evil, may make God withdraw his face. Thoſe glorious Angels, were they not caſt out from Gods face, and chained up in darkneſſe, for nothing but proud and lofty thoughts? Yea, *David* a good man, he began to have ſome ſecret ſecure thoughts within him, to think his mountain was well ſetled, but God immediately *hid his face, and he was troubled.* This mountain begins to skip like a Lamb for fear. Take heed then of ſecret, cloſe, and inſinuating thoughts of pride and ſelf-ſulneſſe; for this makes God, as the Father to the Child, that is preſuming of it ſelf, to withdraw from thee.

3. *Too much inordinate affections and deſires, even to lawfull things*; this makes God jealous: And for this thou ſhalt not have the comfortable light of his countenance. The *Church appeared with the Moon under her feet.* All ſublunary things, ought to be under the heart of a godly man: But as the Sunne is ſometimes eclipſed, by the interpoſition of the Moon; ſo is the favour of God too often obſcured by minding theſe earthly things. You ſee then, how difficult a thing it is, to keep this fire alwaies upon the Altar: To keep this Lamp from going out. Therefore the prophane man, who never watcheth to theſe things, who doth not *ſeek the Kingdom of Heaven in the firſt place*, cannot have this light of Gods favour.

Laſtly, Thy quiet and peaceable conſcience is not from Gods favour, *but becauſe never aſſulted by the Devil; never checked by doubts and oppoſitions from within. David* had the comfortable beames of Gods favour ſhining upon him, but he had alſo ſad wreſtling within. How often did he chide and rebuke his ſoul, for being ſo inordinately *caſt down within him?* It's a ſaying acknowledged by all Divines, *He that never doubted, never believed. O Lord, I believe, help my unbelief.* Though doubts are not a duty, yet they will be neceſſary companions; as corruptions to our graces.

Of

Of the Joy of Saints, in God and heavenly things, as one Effect of the Light of Gods Countenance: The Nature of it, and the Aggravations of it comparatively to all other Pleaſures whatſoever.

PSAL. 4. 7.

Thou haſt put more gladneſs into my heart, then they have had, when their Corn and Wine encreaſeth.

THis text declareth a Reaſon, *Why David* deſires the light of Gods countenance above any earthly things; *Why* his wiſh is contrary to thoſe of the world. And the Reaſon is deduced from that bleſſed and admirable effect of it upon *David's* heart, God being reconciled, *put more gladneſſe into his heart, then all the pleaſures of the World could amount unto.*

So that in the words, we are to conſider the *Benefit* or *Priviledge* it ſelf, *Gladneſſe.* It's a rule, That (*Omnis vita eſt propter delectationem*) all life, yea all operations, are for delight. So that *Gladneſſe* and *Joy*, is the ſoul in its higheſt felicity: It's the action of the ſoul in flouriſhing Characters: It's the ſoul in its glory: It's *Arras* unfolded and ſpread open.

2. There is the Original and Efficient Cauſe of it, *God*: *Thou haſt put.* Gods comforts and joy, they are like himſelf, infinite, pure, unmixed; there is no fear or ſorrow accompanying ſuch.

3. There is the *manner* of participation, *Thou haſt put it into my heart.* This ſheweth the efficacy and irreſiſtibleneſſe of Gods comfort, *He puts it into the heart*, men cannot: They can only ſuggeſt, they cannot put into the heart. If God puts comfort in, all the troubles and ſad temptations which ariſe in the ſoul, cannot be able to withſtand it, no more then the night can hinder the day from diſpelling of it.

4. There is the Subject or Veſſel receiving it, *My heart.* The worlds joy is but in the *mouth*, or in the *phanſie*; this is in the *heart.*

Laſtly, There is the aggravation of it, by a compariſon with all earthly joy; and that the greateſt which can be: *More then when their Corn and Wine encreaſeth. Judea* was a Land that abounded with Corn and Vineyards: And the Scripture, when it would expreſſe a great joy, calls it *the joy of Harveſt*: Yet *David's* joy is greater then this.

Now though the text inſtanceth in theſe two, yet we are to underſtand *all kind of joy.* The joy of the *rich* man, of the *great* man, of the *voluptuous*: *Let the joy be what it can be in any earthly thing, an heavenly heart hath from God a better joy.* It's true, ſome Interpreters make this the ſenſe; as if *David* did here profeſſe his joy, becauſe his enemies whom he reproved in the beginning of his Pſalm did thus encreaſe. As if he would ſay, Though they hate and oppoſe me, yet I am ſo farre from bearing ill will to them, that I rejoyce in their abundance. Yea, ſome Popiſh Interpreters, make a myſticall meaning, as if here were a Propheſie of the delight of Gods people; becauſe of the Sacrament conſiſting of Bread and Wine: Yea, Oyl is added in ſome Copies of their Tranſlations, as if their extream Unction were alſo intended. But this is indeed, to make

make the Scripture a Noſe of Wax, as they call it ſometimes. Therefore the Hebrew Prepoſition *Min*, though it ſometimes ſignifie *Of*, yet in many places, it's to be interpreted comparatively, *For rather*: And thus it is here. Obſerve,

That the godly have more joy from God, and heavenly things, then all the men of the World can have in their earthly delights.

If a wicked man did but know what the comfort and conſolation is, that doth accompany an holy life, he would judge all his earthly pleaſures, to be like the Prodigals husk. He would cry out of his madneſſe; Oh fooliſh and unwiſe, that have left this ſpiritual joy, to partake of humane and worldly! 1 *Pet.* 1.8. It's called *unſpeakable joy, and full of glory*. Such a joy, that it can never be *expreſſed*: As a Father, or a Mother, cannot expreſſe their natural affections. It's a joy, which the godly that feel it, cannot declare unto another; but when they have ſaid all they can, ſtill they feel more. Though *out of their abundance the heart ſpeakes*, yet it cannot ſpeak all it's *abundance*. And as a godly man cannot *expreſſe* it, ſo neither can a natural man *believe* any ſuch thing; he cannot be perſwaded that there is ſuch joy in it. As he that hath not taſted Honey, cannot judge how ſweet it is: Neither can a blind man think, what a glorious creature the Sunne is.

Let us therefore firſt open the abſolute nature and dignity of this Joy, then ſpeak of it comparatively.

And in the firſt place, *The glory and dignity of this joy, is from two particulars in the text.*

The nature of this Joy.

Firſt, It is from the *Original*. As there is a *Wiſdome which comes from above*, that is heavenly; and a *Wiſdome fleſhly and deviliſh*: ſo alſo, there is a *joy* which comes from *above*, that is pure and excellent; and there is a *joy*, that is of the *World*, and the *fleſh*, and this is indeed deviliſh. But the *joy* which a godly man receiveth, it's from Heaven, from God himſelf; and ſo hath a pure and choice excellency in it. It differs from worldly joy, as the elementary fire from the culinary. The elementary fire, needs no *pabulum*, no wood to maintain it, it will not periſh; but the kitchen fire, that muſt have wood or coales, it will not laſt any longer then this fewel. Thus all worldly joy, that muſt have daily ſticks and coales put to it. If Friends die, if Wealth be loſt, Pleaſures denyed, this joy is gone: but this joy from above, abides the ſame. As long as God abides in Heaven, ſo long that continues; unleſſe we by our ſinnes, provoke God to take it away. All the world cannot give ſuch a joy as this is. Therefore *Gal.* 5.22. it's called *the fruit of Gods Spirit*; and often, *Joy in the holy Ghoſt*. Hence the Spirit of God is called the *Comforter*: And God is ſtiled (2 *Cor.* 1.3.) the *God of all conſolations*, becauſe it is he alone that workes it. Men may create the world as well, as of themſelves get ſuch a joy as this. Hence the people of God walk many times mournfully for the want of it; And there is no *Samaritan* can put this Oyl into their wounds. *David* cannot alwaies ſay, *God put ſuch joy in his heart*: Yea, he profeſſeth the clean contrary ſometimes, That his ſoul was *bowed down*; that he *watered his bed with teares*. And *Job*, was almoſt like a damned man in Hell. But of the Reaſon of this deſolateneſſe, we may ſpeak hereafter; It's enough that this demonſtrateth God to be the Author of all our joy: And that as all the men in the world cannot make the Sunne ariſe in the morning, did not God appoint it that natural courſe; ſo neither are any able to bring this joy into their hearts.

Therefore in the ſecond place, *The ſecond diſcovery of this joy is from the manner of working it; Thou didſt put it into my heart*: That is an excellent expreſſion. It ſheweth what dominion and ſoveraignty God hath over the heart: He can as eaſily put joy into thy ſoul, though afflicted, though tempted, though

grieved with ſinne, as thou canſt pour Wine into a Bottle. He can with a word, command waters to become Wine. So that as the Orthodox maintain, That Gods grace in converting the heart, is irreſiſtible; it's inſuperable: The heart cannot reſiſt it with finall prevalency. For *à nullo duro corde reſpicitur; quippe ad hoc datur ut tollat cor durum.* So it's true alſo in ſpiritual joy; The grieved heart, the ſad heart cannot reject it, becauſe it's given to take away the ſad heart. Hence we read of the people of God, the Martyrs and others, that they have rejoyced under their tribulations, more then their Perſecutors did under all their abundance. How was this poſſible, but that God did ſo fill their hearts, that no outward or inward miſery could have any room there? This ſhould teach the people of God to walk ſo exactly, that they may not on the contrary ſay, God hath put more bitterneſſe into their heart, then any can have in their worldly miſeries. For as the joy of God is more then all earthly joy, ſo the ſenſe of Gods anger and wrath, cauſeth more ſorrow and anguiſh of ſpirit, then all outward calamities can do. *A wounded ſpirit, who can bear?*

Thirdly, *This Joy which God puts into our hearts, followeth upon a true godly ſorrow and mourning for ſinne.* All the joy of thy heart, which doth not flow from humiliation and deep ſorrow for ſinne, it's but a blaze; it's like the *crackling of thornes.* And this is neceſſary to be obſerved; for the Hypocrite, who never had any true ſound grace, yet he may have ſome tranſitory joy. So *Mat.* 13. *They received the Word with joy*: And ſome *rejoyced in John Baptiſts light*; but it was for a *ſeaſon only.* And thus many in ſome fits, yea in ſome holy duties, find a gladneſſe and inward joy upon their hearts; but this never had a true ſorrow go before. Before *Paul* was admitted into Goſpel joyes, he was ſtriken to the ground, and had a deep ſenſe of his former guilt. Therefore the Promiſe is, *Bleſſed are they that mourn, for they ſhall rejoyce*, Mat. 5. Therefore as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks concerning afflictions, it's true alſo of godly ſorrow; *They that ſow in teares, ſhall reap in joy.* Many deſire joy; they are willing to hear of a Sermon that may cauſe gladneſſe in their hearts; but then they cannot endure the preparatory unto it: They do not love the Law ſhould wound them, before the Goſpel heal them. But this is the nature of all heavenly joy, it's a daughter to godly ſorrow. *Verus panitens de peccato dolet, & de dolore gaudet.* And this is it which makes godly joy ſo welcome and ſo precious, becauſe the heart was mourning, and humbled before, thinking it ſelf unworthy of any joy in the leaſt manner: Though others might rejoyce, yet not they. This then is the method God takes; Firſt the Spirit of God is a Spirit of Supplication and mourning, then it's a Spirit of Joy and conſolation.

Fourthly, *This joy which God putteth in the heart, it's from ſpiritual and heavenly motives.* Therefore the duty is ſo often called for to *Rejoyce in the Lord*: And it's called *Joy in the holy Ghoſt.* It ariſeth from Gods favour, from Goſpel-Priviledges; becauſe God is reconciled; becauſe ſinne is pardoned; becauſe we are *juſtified through the blood of Chriſt.* So that the joy of a godly man, and of a natural man, differ as much as Heaven and Earth. For what makes thee rejoyce at any time? Is it ſome worldly pleaſure? Is it not ſome earthly content? Is it not becauſe ſuch and ſuch earthly advantages befall thee? Thy heart is never cheerfull and merry, but from ſuch conſiderations. Now, how different, and poor, and contemptible are theſe to this heavenly Joy? For the gladneſſe of their heart, ariſeth from the love of God; from an Intereſt in Chriſt; from the conſideration of eternal glory. Theſe ſublime and ſpiritual Objects, do raviſhthe godly ſoul. So that the delights of a beaſt, are not more inferiour to the delights of a man, as a rational man, then the delights of a man are to him, as a Chriſtian. What the Apoſtle ſpeaketh concerning the thoughts and words of

of a Child, comparatively to a man, the ſame is true alſo in reſpect of joy, 1 *Cor.* 13. Children have their joy; they laugh as Children; they rejoyce in their Babies as Children: but when they come to be men, they cannot rejoyce as Children; they cannot delight to play as they did, when little Boyes. Thus when thou art once made godly, and haſt taſted of more excellent Joy, thou canſt not delight in the pleaſures of ſinne, nor in the greateſt advantages of the world: They are below thee. Thou ſaieſt to thy ſelf, when inordinately rejoycing in theſe things, as ſhe did, but falſly, to *David*; *Thou haſt made thy ſelf like one of the vile fellows to day.* The godly mans joy comes from an higher Spring, then the worlds doth.

Fifthly, Hence in the next place, *No man can have this ſpiritual joy, but ſuch who are regenerated, and born of God*: Who have a ſpiritual and ſupernatural life. We ſee in nature, that according to the ſeveral kinds of life, ſo there are ſeveral delights, and proportionable thereunto, the natural and animal life, the rational life, the ſenſe hath its delights, and reaſon hath its delght. Thus when a man is born again, he hath his joy and his delight. Do not ye read often of *David*, that profeſſeth the Word of God, was *ſweeter then the honey or the honey-comb to him?* Doth he not ſay, That his heart *panted after God, like a parched wilderneſſe*, and *more then the hart doth after waters?* And whence is all this, but becauſe *David* is a *man after Gods own heart?* And indeed, it's wholly impoſſible that a man ſhould rejoyce in any ſpiritual Object, till he himſelf be made holy. As our Saviour told his Diſciples, *He had other meat to eat of, then they knew of.* So hath every godly man, other joyes, other delights, then any natural man can conceive. Therefore do not keep off from godlineſſe, for fear of looſing thy joyes; do not think that is to bid farewell to all cheerfulneſſe and gladneſſe of heart: but rather, thou never yet didſt know what true joy means; as yet thou art a ſtranger to it; for none but a regenerate man can enter into this Joy.

Sixthly, *This joy which God puts into the hearts of his people, it's unſpeakable and unexpreſſible.* Like that *new Name*, and *hidden Manna*, *which none knoweth, but he that hath it.* Prov. 14. 12. *A ſtranger doth not intermeddle with this joy.* There are ſome things that are ſo experimentally perceived by us, that a man cannot expreſſe them: He feeleth them, and is fully perſwaded of them, yet he cannot tell how to expreſſe this to another. As life, a man doth feel and know he liveth, yet who can tell another what his life is? *Job* was in bitterneſſe and ſorrow, and it was above his expreſſion; his Friends cenſured him, but ſaith he, *If your ſouls were in my ſtead, you would judge otherwiſe.* If you felt what I feel, you would be of another mind. And thus it is in regard of ſpiritual joy; You are apt to condemn the generation of the godly; Why will they be ſo ſtrict and preciſe? Why will they not runne into the ſame exceſſe of ſinne, and enjoy the ungodly pleaſures of the world as others do? Oh know, you ſpeak fooliſhly in this thing! If your ſouls were in a godly mans ſtead; if you had ever felt what they feel; if you had ever perceived upon your ſouls that which they have done, you would quickly change your minds, and your converſation alſo. You would then ſay, An hour of this Joy, is more then a thouſand years of the worldly joy: That a drop of this, is more then an Ocean of carnal pleaſures. This made *David* call upon wicked men, to *taſte and ſee how good God is.* If you would taſte; if you would ſet your ſelves to try what this Joy is, you would then quickly perceive a difference: But none knoweth this, ſave thoſe who have the experience of it.

Seventhly, *The nature of this joy, is to put a man upon all holy actions*: Upon active and ſerviceable wales for God. And thus in regard of its Effects and Operations, it differs from worldly joy, as much as Heaven from Earth; or Gold from droſſe. For when the heart of a wicked man is merry, what doth it

put him upon, but ungodly practices? Then they muſt go to their cups, to their ſports, then they muſt go to their frolick and wanton playes: Thus their joy makes them very wicked; whereas this godly joy putteth a man upon praiſing and bleſſing of God- *Is any man merry let him ſing Pſalmes*, Jam. 5.13. It puts him upon more fervent and cheerfull praying, hearing; and no Chriſtian is ſo active and lively as he that is joyfull, *Neh* 8.10. *The joy of the Lord* is ſaid *to be their ſtrength.* There needeth not then any great labour to diſcern the godly mans mirth and the wicked mans: For the wicked he encreaſeth his ſinne thereby, he is more hardned to do wickedly. This joy is like the Devil to the herd of ſwine, which were hurried violently to hell; they would never do that in a ſober ſad ſpirit, they do then.

We have declared the nature of this heavenly gladneſs abſolutely; *Let us now conſider the aggravation of it comparatively to all other pleaſures whatſoever*; that ſo all unregenerate men may ſee they live to their loſs, and that one day in godlineſs affords more true ſolid comfort, then the whole life of a wicked man, though he ſhould live *Methuſalem's* age. And

How it exceeds all worldly Joy.

Firſt, *Spiritual joy exceeds all Wordly, in regard of the purity of its nature.* It is an unmixed joy, there is nothing adhering to it, to make an abatement, or put a check to it; whereas all wordly joy hath gall as well as hony; there is no Roſe groweth without its pricks. Look over all the wordly comforts that every where are enjoyed, ſee if they have not a *But* in them; as was ſaid of *Naaman* the *Syrian*, He was a great man, an honoured man, a rich man, *but he was a Leper*, that took off from the reſt: So of every unregenerate man, He hath ſuch an eſtate, ſuch friends, ſuch advantages to delight in; *but* there is ſuch a ſinne, and ſuch a ſinne, which if rightly conſidered would marre all his comfort. Do not thou therefore ſet thy ſoul to rejoyce and to take its eaſe, for there is either the commiſſion of ſuch ſinnes, or the omiſſion of ſuch duties, that would quickly wound thy heart, and take thee off from all thy jollity; whereas now come to this heavenly joy, there is joy, and no cauſe of ſorrow joyned with it. This is like the upper region, where there are no Meteors: Look round about thee, Think of God, of Chriſt, of eternity, of death, yea of ſinnes, and thou haſt cauſe to rejoyce; for all theſe things work for thy good. It's true, there is a time when the godly are called to mourning, when they are to faſt and humble themſelves; but conſider, this holy mourning doth not oppoſe, but encreaſe heavenly joy. The more thou canſt mourn for thy own ſinnes, or the ſinnes of the Nation, the greater is thy joy in the Lord: So that ſuch mourning doth make thee abate of thy natural and earthly comforts, but not at all of thy heavenly comforts: So that heavenly joy is of ſuch a pure nature, that it's better then gold, it cannot have any droſs mixed with it; it's like the pure flames of the fire, which cannot receive any mixture with it. Therefore do then conſider over all thy worldly delights. Was there ever any that did afford meer matter of comfort? Is there not ſome occaſion of grief, of vexation, of diſcontent as well? whereas all heavenly things afford only delight, and no trouble at all.

Secondly, *Spiritual joy is more cordial and ſubſtantial*; it doth more inwardly poſſeſs a man, then any earthly joy can do: *Diſce gaudere*, ſaid *Seneca*: Thou haſt put it into my heart, ſaith *David*, Pſal. 33.21. *Our heart ſhall rejoyce in him*, and *Pſal.* 3.5. *My heart ſhall rejoyce in thy ſalvation.* Hence you heard it was called *unſpeakable joy*; and the *peace of God*, which is the cauſe of this joy, is ſaid *to paſs all underſtanding.* Therefore our Saviour prayeth, *Joh.* 17, that *this joy might be filled in them*; a notable expreſſion to declare that the comfort Gods people have, is of a farre more ſolid and real nature, then what men of the world have: They are never heartily and truely joyfull, for there is either the ſting of ſome ſinne, the guilt of conſcience, or the fear of ſome danger,

danger, that doth greatly check their joy: Insomuch that many times the ungodly of the world, they put the best face upon things they can; they would bear it out, as if they had peace, and they had comfort, when God knoweth, and their own heart, feeleth many tormenting feares within them. *Solomon* speaks fully to this of a wicked man, *Prov* 14.13. *Even in laughter the heart is sorrowfull*; his meaning is, that a wicked man in the midst of all jollity, and a carnal mirth, yet he hath but a sad heart, and why? There is guilt with him, there is a conscience secretly repining in him, and though he striveth to bear it down, and would make a greater noise then that, yet these whisperings, and secret accusations do greatly weaken their joy; for it's enough that conscience accuseth thee, though none in the world else can witness against thee, *Quid proderit tibi non habere conscium, habenti conscientiam?* What will it avail thee to have thy conscience accusing thee, though there be no witnes conscious with it? Was not *Belshazzar* in the midst of all his jollity and excessive riot? Yet the appearing of an *hand-writing* made him quake, and his knees to tremble. Why might not he have thought it had been some good Angel, or there was some writing for him to encrease his kingdome? No, but before ever he can tell what it is, he is afraid, and trembles, his heart was guilty, *Semper præsumit sæva mala conscientia.* Thus take the most wanton, loose, and jolly sinner that is, his heart being guilty, he alwayes thinketh and feareth the worse; now the Lord remembers such and such sinnes: So that it's not the laughing, and ranting, and singing of merry Songs, that demonstrate a joyfull heart; no, there may be sadnes and terrour within for all that; whereas this spiritual joy filleth up the heart of a godly man, whatsoever presents it self, he can rejoyce. At this time, when *David* professeth his joy, it was outwardly a most sad time with him. For Expositors judge, he was now pursued by *Absolom* his own sonne, who riseth against him, his people forsake him, *Shimei* raileth at him, telleth him, God had now avenged the blood of *Saul* upon him; and all this was occasioned by his own wickedness; yet in the midst of all these sad circumstances, he had so much joy in his heart: So that the godly even while he weepeth and mourneth, hath joy, and the wicked even while he laugheth and rants it, yet hath gnawing worms within him.

Thirdly, *Heavenly joy is rational*, setled upon sound and solid grounds. If you see any godly man rejoyce, and walk with a chearfull spirit, it's well done, there is cause for it; who may do it if not he? Whereas take any natural unregenerate man, he hath not the least cause of the least smile: If he did as he should do, he would roar and cry out, he would go and weep bitterly, he would smite upon the breast and the thigh, saying, What shall I do? Oh my sinnes, my sinnes! Now this is greatly to be considered, who hath the true cause of rejoycing and who not. Tell not me, such a man liveth a jolly merry life, such a man is at his hearts ease, he liveth in his pleasures all the week long: Oh but what reason, what cause hath he to do so! If he did rightly consider himself, if he did lay his sinnes to his heart, he would mourn and weep, and bewail himself all the day long; for what joy canst thou have, as long as thy sinnes are not pardoned, as long as God is angry with thee, as long as thou mayest tumble into hell every moment? Is it for such an one as thou to be glad, and laugh, and take thy ease? No, our Saviour *Luk* 6.25. pronounceth a *Woe to you, for you shall mourn*, though now you will not: *There is no peace saith my God to the wicked man*; it's the speech of the Prophet *Isaiah*, Chap. 48 22. Stand off then, joy doth not belong to thee, it's the godly mans portion; none may, or hath cause to walk chearfully but he, for the favour of God is upon him, God is not angry with him, his sinnes they are forgiven, death and the day of Judgement can do him no hurt, whether poor or rich, whether well or ill, whether living or dying, he hath cause to rejoyce, *Phil* 4 4. *Rejoyce in the Lord alway, and*

again

again I ſay rejoyce: Rejoyce alway. There is no time wherein thou mayeſt not rejoyce. Do not ſay, I have this affliction, I have this ſad tryall upon me: It's no matter, ſaith the Apoſtle: Let it be how it will be with thee, Rejoyce alway; and indeed let the wicked and ungodly tremble; let them cry out with horrour, thoſe that have the guilt of their ſinnes upon them, thoſe that every moment may be adjudged to hell; let them mourn and tremble: But for a godly man, he hath no cauſe at all, but to *rejoyce in the Lord alwayes.*

Fourthly, *Joy from the Lord will have a good end, there will be no ſad reckoning for it afterwards:* There will be no cauſe to repent of it; but all wordly joy though it doth pleaſe thee for a time, yet there is a ſting in the tail of it, there will be a bitter account to be made at the day of Judgement, and this certainly you ſhould rightly conſider of: Theſe pleaſures, this carnal delight of mine, will it not coſt dear hereafter? Will not all this hony turn into choler? Will not my torments be according to my pleaſures? What ſaith *Solomon* to his young man that is moſt given to follow his delights, *Eccleſ.* 11.9. *Rejoyce O young man, and walk in the wayes of thy heart,* purſue thy luſts, care for nothing, trample Gods word under thy feet, *but know thou, that for all theſe things God will bring thee to judgement*; and is not this like an hand-writing in the wall? The thoughts of what will be hereafter, may juſtly ſtrike out all thy preſent delights: I am merry now, laughing now: But ſhall I do thus when death comes? ſhall I laugh when at the day of judgement I ſhall ſtand arraigned at his Tribunal? Oh do not admire ſuch pleaſures, that will coſt ſo dear at the latter end! But for the godly mans joy, that will never ſhame him, that will never grieve him, but as the Apoſtle ſpeakes about repentance, it's a *repentance never to be repented of.* Thus here is a joy that is alwayes to be joyed in, a joy that will never trouble thee hereafter, whereas for all this wordly joy thou muſt mourn again; it hath been the time of thy ſinning, and of thy rebelling againſt God, and therefore all this will turn into bitterneſs at the latter end; If theſe pleaſures would not turn into torment, then it were ſomething; but as theſe have abounded, ſo will thy torments and troubles alſo abound. Thou canſt not ſay with *Agag*, the bitterneſs of death and hell are paſt: What is the ſad end of all *Dives* his joy? Yea ſometimes they are deſtroyed in the very midſt of all their pleaſures, as the *Philiſtimes*, and as *Nabal* were.

Fifthly, *The joy and gladneſs of a godly man is ſtable and perpetual, becauſe the ground and cauſe of it is unchangeable:* God never ceaſeth to be his Father, he ſhall never be caſt out of the ſtate of Juſtification, he ſhall never loſe his intereſt in Heaven; now this rock alwayes abiding, their joy muſt alſo be immoveable. It's true, though the godly have cauſe alwayes to rejoyce, yet they do not ſo actually; for the preſent they may mourn and be in bitterneſs, but that many times is cauſed by their own ſinne and weakneſs; or elſe God to give them more comfort, afterwards doth ſuſpend preſent comfort, as the Sunne is moſt welcome after a tempeſtuous black ſtorme; but though this be, yet the foundation of their joy remaineth ſure, there is the ſame cauſe why they ſhould rejoyce alwayes. Oh but thus it is not with the unregenerate man, all his joy is but a blaze, and all the cauſe or ground of it is very uncertain. Every creature and condition they rejoyce in, is it not mutable? To day laughing, to morrow crying: To day cheerfull becauſe thou haſt it, to morrow mourning becauſe thou haſt loſt it. Thus in *Job*, Chap. 20. 5. *Zophar* ſaith, *The triumphing of the wicked is ſhort, and the joy of an hypocrite for a moment:* The oil to this lamp will quickly fail, thy honours, thy life, thy wealth, theſe things will not laſt alwayes. Oh then ſhould it not be thy wiſdome to lay up for ſuch joy, that will abide continually, that will never leave thee! Is it not evident folly to take thy delight in that, which may be loſt the next hour? As *Jonah* took great content in his

Gourd,

Gourd, and within a day a *worme* breedeth therein, and conſumeth all. Therefore ſay of thy worldly joy, as thou mayeſt of thy life it ſelf; It is but a *bnble*, a *vapour*, here to day and gone to morrow; if thou couldeſt preſerve all this delight continually, and death it ſelf could not rob thee of it, then go on, and make much of it: But to thy terrour thou wilt find the inſtability of it, as with the *Sodomites*, *The morning was fair and pleaſant, but fire and brimſtone was upon them before night.* For ought thou knoweſt, thou mayeſt go from laughing here, to eternal roarings in hell the next moment.

Sixthly, *Spiritual joyes tranſcend earthly, becauſe the ſoul can better perceive them*, they are of a more ſpiritual and penetrating nature and efficacy: The ſoul can receive them as the ſpunge doth water, or the iron doth fire, the ſoul may be filled with it: but all bodily delights and joy, they are more groſs and thick: This reaſon give the Schoolmen, why all ſoul delights are above the body, and much more if they be ſpiritual and heavenly: As thoſe ſinnes which are immediately ſeated in the ſoul, they are more deep and inward then bodily ſinnes; ſo that joy and delight which enters immediately into a mans ſoul, is farre more ſoaking and preſſing, then that which is upon the body primarily: For bodily joyes are like the Sunne-beames, which come in at a cranny, or little hole; but ſoul delight is as when the Sunne comes in at a window, or at a great door, there is capacity enough to receive it.

Seventhly, *All earthly joy is to be moderated*, we may ſinne in it, we may go too farre, we may over-joy: Therefore the Pſalmiſt exhorts, *Pſal.2. to rejoyce with trembling.* While we take any joy in theſe earthly things, we are to do it with trembling, for then is a temptation to ſinne, then are we in greateſt danger, in the midſt of heat we are ſubject to take cold. Hence the Apoſtle ſaith, 1 *Cor.7. Thoſe that rejoyce, muſt be as if they did not rejoyce:* So great a care are we to have that our joy bemoderated, we do not ſay it's unlawfull to take delight, and joy in the creatures, the Scripture commands to *eat and drink with joy of heart*, only we muſt not joy exceſſively, we may quickly let this joy overflow the bankes; and certainly the carnal and immoderate joy that men take even in lawfull things, is no little part of their iniquity: For why is it that thy heart can rejoyce in outward mercies, thou canſt take delight in theſe creatures, but haſt none at all in heavenly things? A Fair, a Market is thy delight, when thou canſt not call the Sabbath a delight: Is not all this, becauſe thy heart over-joyeth in theſe things.

Uſe of Exhortation, not to be diſheartned at godlineſs, as if it were a ſad, melancholy, mopiſh life: Oh know, thou never comeſt to have true joy, til thou live the godly, exact, and preciſe life! The cloſer thou walkeſt with God, the more fearfull to commit any ſinne, the more unſpeakable and ſolid is thy joy. Oh call not that laughter and mirth of the wicked man, joy! *Solomon* ſaith, it's not joy, it's *madneſs:* Do not ye ſee mad men; they will laugh, and hoot, and leap with jollity, when they are bereft of reaſon, and lye in chains bound up in a dark Dungeon? Such is all the worlds laughter: They die laughing, They go to hell laughing, and is not this madneſs? Yet who can perſwade men to leave their carnal jollity, and to taſt how good and pleaſant the wayes of God are? Well, go on and take thy delights, thou wilt have laughing enough one day: *for* Prov.1. *God will laugh at thy deſtruction, and mock when thy fear cometh.*

Of

Of the Godly Mans Holy Security, and Admirable quietneſſe of Spirit, as another Effect of the Light of Gods Countenance.

PSAL. 4. 8.

I will both lay me down in peace, and ſleep, for thou (Lord) only makeſt me dwell in ſafety.

WE have heard of one glorious *Effect* of the light of Gods countenance upon *David*, viz. *A gladneſſe ſurpaſſing all the joy that can be in the world*; now in this verſe, we have a ſecond, and no leſſe noble *Effect* of the ſame *cauſe*. For as the Sunne hath many ſeverall and notable effects upon the earth; it doth not only enlighten or comfort, but makes fruitfull, and aboundeth alſo in many other effects. Thus *the favour of God*, where that is perceived, it is not one or two, but many glorious conſequents flow from thence. And this in the text, is an *holy ſecurity, and admirable quietneſſe of ſpirit, free from all ſinfull diſtempers*, let his danger be never ſo great. So that this heavenly tranquillity, is a *fruit* of that *Faith* which he had in God, at this time, though ſo greatly tempted.

Therefore in the words, you have *David's godly ſecurity, a fruit of his Faith*, expreſſed in *two actions*, as a manifeſtation of it; with the Reaſon, and the Cauſe of it.

The *Actions* demonſtrating his quiet ſpirit, are,

1. *His lying down in peace.*
2. *His ſleeping.*

His *lying down*; that denoteth, He would not be interrupted in his natural actions, and ordinary courſe of life; he would eat, and drink, and go to bed for all that.

But becauſe many go to bed, and though they put of their cloathes, yet cannot lay aſide their tormenting and vexing cares, whereby, though they *ly down*, yet are *reſtleſſe* and *ſleepleſſe*, toſſing from one ſide to another: Therefore ſecondly, he addeth, *I will take my ſleep.* All that danger and trouble he was in, ſhould not break his ſleep; he would take his reſt as ſweetly as ever he did in the midſt of his Proſperity.

Now certainly, if you do conſider in what a temptation and danger *David* was in, you will ſay it's impoſſible; or rather, that Faith which makes us depend on God, in ſuch ſtreights, with the effects of it, are no leſſe admirable, then miraculous Faith. It's generally concluded on by the beſt Interpreters, that this Pſalm was made upon the ſame occaſion which the immediate one going before was; and that appeareth by the Inſcription, to be compoſed when *David* fled from *Abſolom*. So then, *David* ſaith, *He will lye down and ſleep*: Take his ſweet reſt, when he was in that flight of his, purſued by *Abſolom*. And if you would know, how grievous that was, conſult 2 *Sam.* 15. the whole Chapter, eſpecially verſe 30. there you will find, that *Abſolom* by fair pretences of Juſtice and Religion, had ſtolen the hearts of all the people

to

to himſelf, againſt *David* his Father; whereupon he makes Warre, raiſeth a great Army. The conſpiracy was carried on with great pride and policy, inſomuch that *David* is forced to *fly* from *Jeruſalem*, and to runne whither he can for his ſafety; all the people did generally forſake him: So that he with ſome few, went up to Mount *Olivet*; and as he went, he *wept*, and covered his *face*, and went *barefoot*, and all the people went with him, and *wept* alſo. What a ſad ſight was this, to ſee *David*, ſo Religious a King, ſo potent, who had conquered ſo many Enemies, to be brought into this extreamity? Yea, his eſtate was ſo deſpicable, that one man *Shimei*, Chap. 16. came out and *curſed* him, *railed* on him; *Come out thou bloody man, Thou man of Beliall*; and *threw ſtones* and *duſt* at him. By all this, you ſee his miſery was great enough. But adde to this; That at this very time, *David* knew God brought this evil upon him for his *Adultery*, and *Uriahs buſineſſe*; the Prophet had threatned him thus. So that both God and man ſeem againſt him; he is forſaken of all, and his conſcience tels him for what this is: He can eaſily tell the ſinnes that make it thus with him. Yet for all this, ſee his admirable Faith, in the powerfull effects of it; *I will lay me down and ſleep.* Would you think, that *David* could make ſuch a Pſalm as this, and ſpeak after this manner, even when he went *barefoot* and *weeping* in that direfull manner? This is ſo incredible, that ſome have thought it could not be literally true of *David*, and have made myſtical applications of it to Chriſt; but upon very weak grounds.

Yet leſt you ſhould think this came from ſome ſtupidity, or fool-hardineſſe, or from Stoical Apathie (for *David* doth in a high manner, that which the Stoicks ſo highly commend, but could never themſelves practice) he addeth the reaſon of it; by which you may ſee, it was not carnal ſecurity, but holy confidence.

The Reaſon is taken from Gods *Protection* and *care*: He doth not thus ſecurely take his reſt, becauſe though generally forſaken, yet ſome mighty men of valour did cleave to him, and he had old Souldiers, whereas the Conſpiratours were many of them inexpert: Nor doth he think that he had outwitted them, by ſending his faithfull Friend *Huſhai* into *Abſolom's* Court, to undermine him, while he pretended to ſerve him, but all is from God; *Thou alone makeſt me dwell in ſafety.* It was God, and he *only*, that could protect and defend him.

In the expreſſion of *David's* ſecurity, *I will both lay me down and ſleep*; the Hebrew word *Juchdan*, hath troubled Interpreters: The *Septuagint* tranſlate it, ἐπι τὸ αυτο: Some *Simul*, ſome *Pariter*. *Auſtin* makes *in id ipſum* to be God: He would reſt in God, who only is, *I am, that I am*: But that is ignorance of the Hebrew. Some relate it to *David's* enemies; He would lye down with them, though they were *millions* about him, as *Pſalm.* 3. Others relate it to his own company, that did faithfully adhere to him in this his temptation. But they ſeem to take it moſt genuinely, that relate it to the actions; *I will both lie down and ſleep*: One as well as the other, to demonſtrate the fiducial frame of his ſpirit. From this Explication, Obſerve,

The wonderfull Effects of Faith in quieting the ſoul in Afflictions.

That Faith depending on God, in a lively and vigorous manner, doth ſo comfort and quiet the heart, in the midſt of great ſtreights, as if there were none at all.

Certainly, *David* could not have ſpoken more ſecurely and quietly at that time, when all the people had made him King, his Enemies vanquiſhed, and he ſetled in his Kingdom. Therefore to ſay this, when he was in imminent

danger of all, and when he was ſo purſued, that he could not tell where he ſhould lie down, or where he ſhould ſleep; this is wonderfull. Oh, how may the very naming of this Doctrine, ſhame the beſt and choiceſt of Gods Children! For little afflictions, that are not to be named to *David's*, they diſquiet thee; they make thee toſſe up and down, and thou art reſtleſſe in thy ſpirit. Oh, do thou ſhame thy ſelf, and thy troubled heart for ever, by this Preſident which *David* hath ſet thee! And leſt you ſhould think this was but a ſuddain flaſh and lightning in *David*, you may find, that this fire did alwaies warm his breaſt. For look to the third Pſalm made by him, while he was in his flight, he ſaith there the ſame thing, only in the *Prterperfect-tenſe*: What he here ſaith he *will do*, you may there ſee he *had done*. Oh, you would think *David* had little occaſion to make Pſalmes, to be proclaiming his confidence in God! rather to have had his whole ſoul taken up with his military affaires; but thus Faith doth put on ſpiritual Armory upon his ſoul. And that you may not think, only *David* could do this, ſee the like ſecure and holy confidence in the Prophet *Habbakuk*, *Hab.*3.17,18.

The Doctrine xplained.

But let us explicate the Doctrine by ſeverall Propoſitions. As

Firſt, What is meant by *Faith depending and adhering to God?* To know this, you muſt underſtand, that the Scripture attributes *three Acts* to Faith; and ſo Faith is deſcribed *Synecdochically* by one of them, for its whole Nature. Thus Faith is ſometimes *knowledge*; ſometimes it's *aſſent* to the Truths revealed; and ſometimes it's a *fiducial* and confident reſting upon God, or Chriſt: and this is indeed the moſt noble and excellent Act of Faith: Even as reaſon and underſtand are the chiefeſt acts of man, though he can alſo *ſentire*. Faith as it doth thus rely on Chriſt, it Juſtifieth. But not only in matter of *Juſtification*, doth it thus depend on God, but alſo in all outward calamities and ſtreights, it inableth the ſoul to reſt and leane on the Lord. This is that truſting, which *David* doth ſo often exhort to, in the Pſalmes. For as a man cannot walk without legs, or a Bird fly without wings: ſo the ſoul of a man, being wholly unable and impotent, cannot ſubſiſt of it ſelf, but it muſt have ſomething to lean upon. It's like Ivy, that cannot grow of it ſelf. Now if the heart of man be corrupt, his truſt is wholly carnal; he beareth up his heart, and ſupports himſelf with ſome bladders or ſtilts that the world affords him. But if his heart be ſanctified, then he doth ſolely depend upon the Power and Promiſe of God. Now this truſting in God, is a ſpecial duty; and *David* many times uſeth this Argument, *why* God ſhould help him, *becauſe he truſted in him.* We cannot in an higher manner glorifie God, then by truſting in him: For, hereby we acknowledge God to be the *Jehovah*; that he alone doth all things. Inſomuch, that this is one of the chiefeſt duties required in the firſt Commandement. The grace then of Faith, hath this peculiar effect upon a man, that it lifteth up the ſoul to God, and maketh it reſt, and ſolely depend on him. It's true, even in natural men, there ſeemeth to be a truſt in God; but that doth as much differ from this holy confidence, as light from darkneſſe: For, no natural man can put his truſt in God, there being as much grace required to put forth this, as any other holy duty.

Secondly, This truſting in God, hath

Its general Object. And

Its more ſpecial and adæquate Object.

The *general Object*, is, *Any good thing* that we ſtand in need of. So that whatſoever the ſoul wants, or the body wants: Whatſoever thy neceſſities are, thou art to depend on God for the ſupply. This our Saviour inſinuateth, *Mat.* 6. to his Diſciples, when he tels them, they ſhould not be *doubtfull* and *diſtruſtfull, what they ſhould eat or drink*, but reſt *ſatisfied* wholly in Gods

proviſion,

proviſion, who is an *heauenly Father*. And therefore there is not any grace, hath ſuch a peculiar property to allay the tempeſts, and rebuke the ſtormes of the ſoul, as this hath. This is *David*'s Harp, to chaſe away the evil ſpirit. Whence are all thoſe ſoul dividing and tormenting cares, but from want of truſt in God? It were not poſſible thy heart ſhould be ſo diſquieted and toſſed up and down, if thou didſt thus reſt on him: For, *thistruſting in God, it is a Catholocum*; it's a general Remedy to all Exerciſes, to all Dejections. And hence, when the Prophet *Habbakuk* ſaith, *The Juſt ſhall live by Faith*; the great Act of Faith in that place, is *dependance* on God.

But then, Faith as it's truſting and relying on God, hath a *more ſpecial and noble Object*; and that is, *Chriſt our Mediatour*. In the ſenſe of all our guilt and unworthineſſe, we are to throw our ſelves on him: And this is like the looking on the *Brazen Serpent*, by which we are healed. It's not working, or labouring, but reſting of our ſouls on Chriſt that juſtifieth. And indeed, if we can truſt on him for our Juſtification, for our ſalvation, what a ſhame is it, we cannot depend on him for ſupply of all outward neceſſities? Doth not the Apoſtle argue with the higheſt reaſon that can be? *Rom.* 8. *If he hath given us Chriſt, how ſhall he not with him give all things elſe?* Will not this ſhame all thy diſtruſtfull and dividing thoughts, when thou ſhalt ſay, I believe in God for the ſalvation of my ſoul, yet I cannot truſt him with my Children, my health, or any other ſtreight I am in?

Thirdly, The *Motives* to truſt in God in the midſt of all Exerciſes, are *two-fold*:

Gods Promiſe. And

Gods Power.

For as our Saviour ſaid, concerning thoſe who did not believe the Scripture, *They erred, becauſe they did not know the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* Thus it's here; All thy dejected and repining thoughts ariſe within thee, becauſe thou art ignorant of his Truth, his power.

Firſt, There muſt be Gods *Promiſe*, otherwiſe it's not truſt in God, but carnal preſumption. If a man ſhould neither work, nor eat, or drink, yet ſay, He truſts in God for his life, this would be deſperate preſumption; for there is no Promiſe made to ſuch. Therefore whatſoever thy heart is born up with, be ſure thou haſt a Promiſe for it: And if there be a Promiſe, then know *Heaven and Earth will ſooner fail, then that Promiſe.* It's true, in the Old-Teſtament diſpenſation, there were particular Promiſes made for many mercies, ſo that they might the more boldly confide in God. As *David* in this very particular, he had a peculiar Promiſe that the Kingdom ſhould be eſtabliſhed to him; and therefore he was aſſured, that this Conſpiracy of *Abſolom* ſhould not prevail. Now although we have not ſuch peculiar Promiſes made to us, that God will remove ſuch a calamity, take away ſuch an affliction, yet *we have a general Promiſe for every good thing; and that all things ſhall turn to our good.* Which may make *every Believer* ſay, *I know, either God will take this affliction away, or it will be for my good*: That it is better for me to have it, then to be without it. And is not here ground of quietneſſe enough within thee? This makes the Apoſtle *James* give ſuch a Proviſo to all our Petitions; *Let him ask in Faith, nothing doubting,* (Chap. 1.) *for if he doubteth, let him be aſſured, he ſhall have nothing.*

Now how muſt a Chriſtian in every Prayer about temporal things, pray without doubting?

I ſhall not ſay as ſome do, That even in all temporal mercies, we are to pray with the ſame aſſurance as for ſpiritual; That temporal things are as abſolutely promiſed as ſpiritual: And therefore if any temporal mercy be not vouchſafed to us, it's wholly for want of Faith and Confidence. But I rather joyn with

thoſe that ſay, *He muſt not doubt of Gods Truth and Goodneſſe to help, neither muſt he doubt, whether he ſhall not have that or the equivalent*: This he muſt aſſure himſelf of. And truly, if a Chriſtian would proceed thus farre, he would find a world of eaſe, and quietneſſe in his mind.

And as Gods Promiſe, ſo his *Power* alſo; that is a ſecond Motive for this truſt in God. For if we do not believe God is able to raiſe up the dead, to call things as are not, as if they were; If we think the temptation too great, the affliction too deſperate, then we cannot put any aſſurance in God.

Fourthly, We adde in the Doctrine, that *Faith depending upon God*; but that is not *abſolutely* conſidered: For the Devils cannot truſt in him, neither may wicked men; yet God is able to help them, to ſave them: but *relatively* as a *Father*, as *reconciled*. Therefore Chriſt (*Mat.* 6.) makes this the ground of all the truſt his Diſciples muſt have, *becauſe their heavenly Father is in Heaven*. So that till we have theſe perſwaſions of God as a Father, we are but as ſo many vagabond Children, that know not where to have relief. The Child, becauſe he hath a Father, never takes care what he ſhall eat or drink, or put on, becauſe his Father will provide all theſe for him.

Fifthly, We adde, That this Faith muſt depend on God, in a *lively and ſtrong manner*, as *David's* was at this time; or *Abraham's*, when he conſidered not the dead Womb, or did ſo much as ſtagger within himſelf. For if thy Faith be weak; if it be fainting and languiſhing, though thou maiſt have ſupport, yet not ſuch prevalent peace within thee: Thou art in a Combate, not in a Triumph. *David* at another time, is like *Sampſon* without his ſtrength; he ſaith, *All men are lyers*. He thinketh God had forſaken him. So that unleſſe Faith be very vigorus, though thou maieſt be preſerved in thy afflictions, they ſhall not quite overwhelm thee, yet thou wilt not have this peaceable frame. Now the Children of God, ſhould think it not enough to rub through their troubles with agonies and Combates, but with joy and quietneſſe. Grieve becauſe thy heart is ſo much as diſquieted; ſay, Oh weak wretch that I am, that I cannot be as much at eaſe, as if I had no affliction at all!

There remain two more Propoſitions to explicate this Doctrine. And

Firſt, When we ſay, *Faith doth thus quiet and compoſe the ſoul*, you muſt take two Cautions to ſeaſon this.

Firſt, That *Faith doth not this principally of it ſelf*; for that is but a grace or habit, created and infuſed into the ſoul: And therefore as all other graces needs the continual quickning and aſſiſtance of Gods Spirit, ſo likewiſe doth Faith. Hence our Saviour prayed for *Peter*, *that his Faith might not fail*: Implying, that grace of it ſelf would wither and decay, as well as any other, if God did not preſerve it. Therefore the *Apoſtle Peter* doth fully expreſſe the manner of Faiths Influence into this Perſervation, 1 *Peter* 1. 5. It's the *power of God*, that doth principally, and efficiently keep us, only it's *through Faith*. We are not then to conceive, as if Faith of it ſelf had ſuch an inherent efficacy, that by it's ſole juriſdiction, it would command the ſoul, and ſay as God did at the firſt, *Let there be light, and there ſhall be light*. No: Faith it ſelf needs the daily quickening of Gods grace, as well as other graces. Yea, this grace would ſooner decay then others; becauſe of the hearts contrariety to it, making a man to live above the Principles of ſenſe and common reaſon. Inſomuch, that it's no wonder to ſee a man love God, be patient in afflictions; theſe though not wrought by the power of nature,

nature, yet have a conviction from the light of nature; but ſo hath not *Faith.*

The ſecond *Caution* is, *That we do not think, as if we could believe in our ſelves*: as if by our own humane ſtrength, we could obtain ſuch a peaceable frame of heart. No: If it could be ſo, then *David* at other times, and that it may be in farre leſſe extreamities, would not have been dejected, as he acknowledgeth himſelf to be. Neither would that man have prayed to Chriſt, to *Help his unbelief*, if he could have helped it himſelf. And the experience of the godly doth abundantly confirm this, in what agonies they are plunged; how grievouſly tormented: Oh, how deſirous to quiet their hearts! They Pray, they Meditate, they Read; and all cannot compoſe their ſouls. Now if their hearts were ſubject to their power, as the Winds and Waves are to Chriſt, they would never endure ſuch Conflict within. This argueth therefore, that it's not in mans power to put forth ſuch ſtrong vigorous Acts of Faith, no more then we can command the Heavens to give rain: It's God that muſt both plant and water, and give the encreaſe.

Laſtly, The truth of this Doctrine, doth *extend even to thoſe great Afflictions and Calamities we are in, and that becauſe of our ſinnes.* We can evidently ſee what ſinnes they are, that have provoked God to give ſuch a bitter ſtroke; our own hearts teſtifie unto us, and this argueth the greater work of Faith. For happily it might be granted, That in ſuch Afflictions and Temptations which befall us for *Gods cauſe*, and for righteouſneſſe ſake, we may be full of ſuch joy and ſincerity, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *James* 1. *Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.* And thus the *Martyrs*, they could and did with *David*, lay themſelves down to ſleep in their dark Dungeons, and that the very night before they were to burn at the Stake.

But you will ſay, *How can this joy and confidence hold in ſuch Calamities as fall upon us wholly, becauſe of our ſinnes, we behold Gods anger and our folly, hath brought this on us?*

Now in ſuch troubles, *If we humble our ſelves unto the Lord for our ſinnes, and bewail them, we may have ſuch Calmes of ſpirit*: For this was *David*'s caſe; The Prophet had told him afore-hand, that this ſhould fall out: Becauſe of his Adultery and Murder, his conſcience cryed aloud in the midſt of his military noiſe; yet for all that, he could thus ſet himſelf to his quiet reſt.

How

How the vigorous Actings of Faith do quiet the Heart.

Theſe things premiſed, Let us conſider, How theſe vigorous actings of faith, do thus quiet and appeaſe the heart. And

Firſt, *In that faith doth in the firſt place carry us out to rely on Chriſt as a Mediatour, whereby all our iniquities and ſinnes are done away:* If then ſinne and guilt be removed out of the way, there cannot be any trouble. For as if there had not been ſinne, the earth would not have brought forth briars and thornes: So neither were it not for iniquity eating into the conſcience, there would not be the leaſt fear and trouble upon the heart. This is the wind that makes ſo dreadfull an earthquake at laſt. Wonder not then, if *Davids* faith did compoſe his ſoul in reſpect of that outward danger, for it had before removed a greater evil; *the guilt of ſinne* was now blotted out, *David* is not in that caſe, as when he cryed out, that his *bones were broken*, and that *God ſets his ſinnes before him.* Oh that is a wofull condition, when the guilt of ſinne and afflictions both meet together, when outwardly we have no hope, and inwardly no hope! But this faith doth in the firſt place. It obtaineth reconciliation with God, it ſeeth *Pharaoh* and his great *hoſt* drowned in the ſea; and then it doth eaſily over-look other afflictions, for the favour of God is able to ſweeten all calamities. Thus it was with *Paul*, he tryumphs over all imaginable adverſaries; but why is he thus confident? Becauſe *there is no condemnation to ſuch as are in Chriſt Jeſus.* If then the Sunne ariſe, the dark night will be quickly diſpelled; and ſo if the light of Gods favour doth ariſe, the feares and troubles which ariſe from outward exerciſes are quickly diſſipated. If then thou complaineſt thy ſtrength is ſo ſmall, every temptation is ready to blow thee down; as certainly the leaſt puff will hurl a man down, if faith be not lively, the *Damſels* charging of *Peter* to be of Chriſts company, made him curſe and ſwear, and fearfully apoſtatize; here was no ſuch great cauſe, he was not arraigned, impriſoned, ſentenced to die; but this temptation blew down a ſtrong Oak: which teacheth us, that a little calamity may throw us to the ground, if faith be not lively; and a great one cannot, if faith be vigorous. If (I ſay) thou complaineſt of thy weakneſs, thy feares; Let faith in Chriſt as a Mediatour be more powerfully put forth.

Secondly, *Faith doth quiet and compoſe the ſpirit by impetration, or obtaining of God ſuch a ſpirit. For as you heard*, ſeeing it lyeth not in the power of man, to give himſelf ſuch a ſweet bleſſed frame: No, he would give a world for it, if it lay in his power; it can only be obtained by application unto God: Now that which moſt prevaileth with God is *faith*, *Whatſoever you aſk believing, you ſhall have it:* It's faith only that makes the omnipotent God work for thee and in thee; ſo that when we ſay faith makes the heart thus ſtill and quiet, you muſt not think it comes from faith as a *natural cauſe*, as the fire burneth; but *morally* by prevailing with God. This is the grace that God doth ſo honour; if we truſt on him, if we reſt on him, then God promiſeth to give reſt and peace to our ſoules: Inſomuch that it's *a Chriſtians duty above all things to keep up the grace of faith*, to attend to that, leſt the whole kingdome be loſt, when that is loſt; for God is to us as we believe, ſo God works for us as we truſt in him; ſo that our diſtruſt makes God to be as no God, or as an Idol-god, having eies not to ſee us, or hands not to help us. Gods power will not communicate it ſelf but upon believing; as Chriſt told *Mary*, *Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldſt believe thou ſhouldſt ſee the glory of the Lord?* That glory was to make *Lazarus dead four dayes, and ſtinking in the grave to live again:* Now no leſs glorious alterations,

and

and changes will God work upon thee if thou truſt in him; for hereby Gods *fidelity, goodneſs*, and *power* is engaged, and he will never deceive thoſe, that wholly rely upon him. You ſee then, why faith put forth in a lively manner, can thus quiet the ſoul: *Becauſe it's the condition to which God doth make glorious promiſes.*

Thirdly, *Faith doth inſtrumentally compoſe the ſoul, becauſe by it other graces are alſo ſet a work, and ſo the more purified and cleanſed the ſoul is from all corruption, the clearer the heart is*: As the clearer the ſpring is, then though it be moved and ſtirred, yet for all that the ſtreames will be pure. Thus it is with a godly man, when his heart is ſanctified, cleanſed, and adorned with grace; then though he is plunged into tribulations, inſtead of diſcontent, impatience, grudgings and murmurings, inſtead of dejections and diſquietneſs there is joy, thankfulneſs, and heavenly mindedneſs; as if Juniper or ſweet herbs be thrown into the fire, the fire draweth out their ſweet ſmel; or as the wind blowing upon the ſweet flower, makes it ſmell more fragrantly. Thus alſo when afflictions fall upon the godly, faith having purified their hearts, there do runne forth admirable and ſweet breathings of the ſoul. That faith exciteth other graces, appeareth *Heb.*:1. Where all thoſe glorious acts of grace, which thoſe Worthies abounded in, are attributed unto their faith.

The Arguments by which Faith quieteth the Soul.

Laſtly, *Faith lively exerciſed muſt thus ſerene the heart of a man, becauſe it doth ſuggeſt many noble and excellent arguments, which do abundantly quiet and eſtabliſh the ſoul.* Faith is argumentative, it is very ingenious to find out all thoſe Conſiderations, which the Scripture affoards. Now the Scripture is like the Apothecaries ſhop, that can furniſh with all cordials. As

Firſt, *Faith argueth from Gods giving of Chriſt, every thing elſe that is as neceſſary for us as Chriſt is.* Thus the Apoſtle, *Rom.*8. *If he hath given us Chriſt, how ſhall he not with him give all things elſe?* He doth not ſay *ſome* things, but *all things*; and then the expreſſion *how ſhall he not?* implyeth that it is a moſt abſurd and irrational thing to think otherwiſe. Now then faith doth thus quiet the ſoul. Be not afraid or troubled; the God that afflicts thee, is he that hath given Chriſt to thee: Now if ever God would have refuſed thee, it would have been in this: Know then, that theſe afflictions, theſe troubles, they are good for thee, they are neceſſary to humble thee, to make ſinne bitter, they are as neceſſary in their kind, as Chriſt was in his kind. It cannot be want of love, that theſe exerciſes are upon thee, for is not Chriſt the great pledge of Gods love to thee? Therefore faith turneth the heart of a man from that which is grievous and vexing, to that which is pleaſing and comfortable. Though God giveth not this or that outward mercy, yet he giveth Chriſt, the fountain and original of all.

Secondly, *Faith repreſents God out of his Word in ſome Attributes chiefly above others, inſomuch that the heart of a man being thereby lifted up to heaven to God himſelf, it cannot be diſturbed by things below.* As the Bird while ſoaring aloft in the heavens, is not skared with this fear and that noiſe; ſo while faith beareth up the heart to God, and makes abode with him, it's not diſquieted: It's the looking upon the waters that make giddy; if we look up to the heavens, they cannot diſturb the brain. Now theſe things in God doth faith powerfully improve.

Firſt, *The Wiſdome of God*; that whatſoever the Lord doth, it cannot be done wiſer: Therefore he is called *the only Wiſe God.* Now what wonderfull comfort may be ſuggeſted from hence? That there is no affliction, no temptation, though never ſo heavy, but it cometh and is ordered by infinite wiſdome. If thou hadſt the diſpoſing and ordering of all things, it could not be done more wiſely then it is; nay thy own love to thy ſelf, if wiſe, would order this affliction to come upon

on thee. For do not you ſee a man, whoſe parts of body are gangreend; yet becauſe he is wiſe, though he loveth his eaſe, yet willingly reſigning himſelf to have thoſe parts cut off, for the good of the whole: So that is one of the moſt comfortable conſiderations which faith ſupplies the heart with, that whatſoever temptation is fallen upon thee, the wiſe God hath ordered it; ſo that to repine or to be diſcouraged, is to ſay in effect, Why is not God wiſer? Why doth he not order things with more perfect knowledge? Oh but as long as faith worketh, as long as that puts forth it ſelf, ſo long it beholds matter of wiſdome and admiration in all Gods proceedings.

Secondly, *It repreſents the tender love and bowels of God as a Father,* ſo that all thoſe ſtrokes they come from love. It's his very pity for a while to break and bruiſe them, that they may be healed more effectually. Is the Artificer angry with his plate when he breakes it, and throweth it into the fire? No, it's for to make it more compleat: If ſo be that we were wholly without corruption, if we could walk without ſinne, then God would no more afflict us here on earth, then he doth the glorified Saints and Angels in heaven; but our corruption is ſuch, that God did not love us or regard us, if he did not chaſtiſe us.

Thirdly, *Faith repreſents the ſoveraignty and ſupream dominion, which God hath over the hearts of his children;* therefore he is called *the Father of Spirits.* Now neither man himſelf, nor all the Angels of heaven, are able to give ſuch a compoſed frame. As God only knoweth the hearts of men, ſo he only faſhioneth and frameth them. If you ask, *How is it poſſible that* David *ſhould be thus immoveable? What could keep in his corruption and fleſh from repining and diſturbing?* I anſwer, it's God with whom all things are poſſible: It is this that faith ſuggeſts, though thy heart be impatient, though thou canſt not command the waves thereof to be ſtill, yet God in heaven can. Oh it's eaſily confeſſed, that it is not fleſh and blood that can make ſuch quiet calmneſs of ſoul! No, it muſt be an omnipotent work of the great God. Did not God put terrour into *Cain's* heart, that though he had built Cities, though he did all he could to allay his ſpirit, yet ſtill he trembleth, and cannot but tremble? Thus on the contrary, God he puts joy into the heart of a believer, he bids it lye down and be content; and although never ſo many Hornets come buzzing to ſting him, yet faith keepeth them off: So that that very frame of heart, which even a godly man thinketh it impoſſible for himſelf ever to have, that he finds ſometimes, and wonders how it ſhould be ſo. it's God that either layes load on, or takes burdens off from the ſpirit: So that the very ſame ſinnes and temptations which formerly they could not apprehend without even faintings and ſwoundings of the ſoul, now they can remember, and bleſs God with joy for the pardoning of them.

Uſe 1. *of Inſtruction, to diſtinguiſh between carnal ſecurity and godly confidence.* You have many a prophane man will ſay the words in my Text, *I will lye down and ſleep;* it may be at the very Sermon time, howſoever under the apprehenſion of their pleaſures and profits, they will with *Dives,* bid their ſoul, *take its eaſe.* But can they ſay, *for the Lord taketh care of thee?* No, but it may be, *this night the Devils will fetch thy ſoul:* It may be this night, thou muſt be arraigned at Gods Tribunal. Oh how many are ſick of this ſpiritual lethargy? How many men lye down ſecurely to ſleep, that may awake in hell? But the godly mans confidence ariſeth from ſpiritual Motives; inſomuch that though death and the day of Judgement appear, yet he may and ought to be thus affected.

The Difference between Carnal and Gratious Confidence.

We have heard, that it is the property of *faith* depending on God in a vigorous manner, to compoſe and quiet the heart in the midſt of all calamities, as if there were none at all. Now becauſe even in wicked men, there is a carnal ſenſeleſs ſpirit; that though the anger of God be upon them, though their ſinnes have found them out, yet they can take their eaſe and pleaſures, and lay nothing to heart, and this is an Epidemical diſeaſe. It is good therefore to ſearch into the bottome and difference of a gracious confidence, from a carnal.

Now there are two *ſorts of theſe carnally confident and ſecure men under their troubles.*

The Stoical Security.

Firſt, There is the *Stoical* man, of whom *Seneca* and others of that ſect, do much boaſt: They ſpeak great and ſwelling words, about that man who ſhall fully have received their principles, and confirme himſelf therein: They commend in ſuch a man an indolency and an impaſſibility; that let him be daſhed upon by never ſo many decumane waves, yet for all that he ſtands immoveable like a rock, and is not troubled. Hence is that ſpeech of theires ſo famous, that their wiſe man, if he were burning in *Phalaris* his Bull, he would cry out, *Dulce eſt, & ad me nihil pertinet.* Thus the Stoical Philoſophy, would ſerve to ſet forth as admirable and compoſed a ſpirit under tribulations, as the Chriſtian Religion. But

Let us diſcover *the ſinfulneſs of ſuch a Stoical ſtupid ſpirit.* And

Firſt, Although the Stoicks did thus Thraſonically boaſt in their Books, and *Seneca* ſpeakes high and tranſcendent ſpeeches in this matter, yet when they came to practiſe, they were *feeble and effeminate:* So that they were nothing but words, and empty expreſſions; witneſs that Stoick, who in his health had maintained that pain was nothing; it was but a fancy when he was grievouſly tormented with the Gout, cryed out of his errour, acknowledging when he ſaid ſo, he did not know what pain meant. But now if we look upon the godly in the midſt of their exerciſes, we ſhall find, they did *really put forth ſuch calm and joyfull ſpirits, under the heavieſt preſſures.* *David* (you heard) ſaid, he had done thus, as well as he would do ſo, and the Apoſtles went out *rejoycing from the Councel*, where they had been perſecuted, *becauſe they were accounted worthy to ſuffer for the name of Chriſt*, Act. 5. 41. And thus the many thouſands of Martyrs; they did, though not in *Phalaris his Bull*, yet in as great torments, cry out, Oh how ſweet and comfortable is this! So that no ſect in Philoſophy, the Stoicks nor none elſe are able to bring ſuch a multitude of Martyrs, as the Chriſtian Religion hath: Therefore it's only Gods Word, and the Spirit of God, that can enable us to rejoyce, and take our reſt under ſad afflictions.

Secondly, *The Stoical diſcipline did teach a bruti ſh ſtupidity and ſenſleſneſs under miſeries:* They would deſtroy the very paſſions of grief and fear from a man. Thus they make a man to be no better then a ſtock or a ſtone, that is ſinking under the hammer and axe that comes upon it; but *Chriſtian Religion doth not take away affections, but it moderateth and ordereth them.* *David* you ſee, though thus calme in his ſpirit, yet he is affected with his calamity; he goeth bare foot, covereth his head, and weepeth as he goeth, and Chriſt himſelf wept at *Lazarus* his death. It's the Scriptures rule, neither to deſpiſe the affliction of God, nor yet to ſink under it, *Heb.* 12. 5. We do then preach, that when God brings into ſtreights, we ſhould not prophanely ſlight them, and not hum-

ble our ſelves under Gods hand; or that we ſhould become like bruit beaſts, and be void of an holy fear and grief under his chaſtiſements: But we are ſo to be affected, as yet not to be ſinfully diſquieted. The heart is to be moved, but not to be diſturbed.

Thirdly, This Stoical ſenſleſneſs is not a gracious calmeneſs, *becauſe it doth wholly depend upon their own ſtrength and power.* It was from ſome pretended innocency and mental abilities in themſelves, that they would bear it out ſo reſolutely againſt all dangers. We may ſee by *Seneca's* expreſſions, that thoſe ſublime affectations did ariſe from ſelf-preſumption; but the Chriſtian confidence hath its cauſe wholly from without: They are moſt diffident in themſelves, even when moſt confident. You ſee *David* here and in other places, whenſoever he proclaimeth exceeding quietneſs in his heart, it is ſtill *from God*, not from himſelf, becauſe *the Lord takes care for him*, becauſe *the Lord is his ſtrength and his helper*; inſomuch that if we conſider the motive and original of theſe two confidences, we ſhall find them as diſtant from each other, as the Eaſt from the Weſt; we ſhall find that the one comes from within, the other from without; and therefore that the one is a meer puff, and inflated tumor of the ſoul, a meer buble, which of it ſelf would break, but the other ſolid and induring, being the ſtrength of God himſelf who is omnipotent; for Gods ſtrength is vouchſafed to a godly man, and Chriſt ſheweth forth his power in them, 2 *Cor.*12.10. *When I am weak, then I am ſtrong.* Whereas the proud Philoſoper, when he was ſtrong, then he was weak: Yea *Paul* findeth a kind of omnipotency in himſelf, but not of himſelf, *Phil.*4.13. *I can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me.*

Laſtly, *This Philoſophical boldneſs is only for carnal and vain ends; it was for vain glory, it was to pleaſe their own humours*; it was not to glorifie God, to ſet up his power and goodneſs. You ſee *Davids Pſalmes* breathing forth *praiſe and honour to God continually*, you ſee there is nothing owned but Gods power; whereas whatſoever theſe Apes of fortitude and courage did, it was for vain applauſe, and to ſet up themſelves. The Martyrs were ſo humble and ſenſible of their unworthineſs, even under their greateſt joy and ſupport, that they refuſed the name of Martyr, as too great a word: They ſaid Chriſt only deſerved to be called ſo; for the Scripture gives him that name: So that the wonderful ſtrength and conſolations, wherein the Martyrs did abound, were accompanied with deep apprehenſions of their own unworthineſs, at that very time.

The Mirth and Jollity of moſt wicked men under Gods Judgements: How it differs from a gracious Confidence.

In the ſecond place, Let us come more cloſely to *the generall diſeaſe of all people almoſt*; and that is of ſuch, who though afflicted, though ſtricken with diſeaſes, and ready to give up the ghoſt, or though the hand of God be againſt them ſeveral wayes; yet they will ſay, I will lay me down and ſleep, yea I will ſet my ſelf down, *and drink, and make my ſelf merry, ſinging not care only, but all godly ſorrow away.* Is not this the general corruption of moſt men, who when under the ſad paſſages of Gods providence towards them, they runne to merry company? They do all they can to chaſe away any ſorrowfull thoughts, and think *their only remedy to be carnal pleaſures.* But let not the prophane jolly and ſecure man boaſt in this; for hell doth not more differ from heaven, then this diſpoſition of the godly man, from carnal confidence. For

Firſt, *This ariſeth from a meer bruitiſh ſtupidity.* There hearts are hardened, and are like a Stone or Adamant; ſo that as theſe melt not into water by any art, ſo neither will theſe ſtupid ſinners apprehend the danger they are in, though never ſo afflicted. *Though a fool be pounced in a morter, yet his folly will not depart from him.* He doth no more learn under afflictions, then the bruit beaſts. Do not call this mans his confidence, but his ſottiſhneſſe; his ſtupidity. It's with him, as the Drunkard *Solomon* ſpeaks of, *Prov.* 23. 34, 35. who when he is in as great danger

danger as one that lyeth down in the Sea, or that lyeth upon the top of a Maſt, yet he feareth not: They have ſtricken him, but he felt it not. So that what a miſerable creature a ſenſleſſe ſottiſh Drunkard is, tumbling in the Streets, and trampled upon, yet feeling nothing at all, ſuch miſerable wretches are theſe benummed ſinners; even like the wanton Calf, that leapes up and down, while prepared for the ſlaughter: Whereas holy confidence is accompanied with an exact tenderneſſe and heavenly feeling, as of their own infirmities, ſo alſo of Gods power and grace.

Secondly, *This prophane ſecurity, as it comes from ſottiſhneſſe and ſtupidity, ſo from deſperate ignorance and blindneſſe.* If they did know what curſes might every moment fall upon them; if they did but apprehend the wrath of God ready to devoure them; Oh, how quickly would their jollity be turned into mourning, and their laughter into howling! Stupidity and ignorance commonly go together; yea, one is the cauſe of the other. *Eph.*4.18,19. *Their underſtandings were darkned through the blindneſſe upon them, and then they were paſt feeling.* The blind man doth not ſee the deep ditch, and dangerous holes he is ready to fall into. And therefore obſerve thoſe, who in time of affliction, diſeaſe or dangers, have ſuch ſecurity upon them, and ſee if they be not miſerable, poor, and ignorant men, that know nothing of ſinne; the damnable nature and guilt of it: That conſider not what it is, to lie roaring in hell torments to all eternity. So that all the eaſe they have, is becauſe they are a blind ignorant people. But now the godly mans confidence ariſeth from ſpiritual knowledge; and the more his underſtanding is inlightened, the more holy ſecurity he hath. And therefore *Paul* prayeth, that *Believers might grow in the knowledg of Gods love, the depth and bredth of it*, Ephſ. 1.5,3. Becauſe the more this is known, the more confident and quiet they are. And this is the reaſon why Gods people at firſt, while the apprehenſions of ſinne are freſh and terrible upon them, while the Law is powerfull in its operations, they have not ſuch a calm and ſerene ſpirit: It is for want of that Scripture knowledg of God. The more they know the Promiſe, and the nature of God and Chriſt revealed, the greater boldneſſe and confidence they have.

Thirdly, *The ſecurity that wicked men have, ariſeth from an immoderate deſire to take their pleaſures while they may have them, being deſperate for the future, expecting no good hereafter.* And truly, this is the condition of many; their hearts are filled with a deſperate fool-hardineſſe, that they will take their pleaſures and jollity while they may; They expect little in the world to come. So that theſe very conſiderations which ſhould take them off from ſuch ſecurity, through their corruptions they further themſelves in. See this notably deſcribed *Eſa.* 22.12, 13. When God call'd to weeping and mourning, there was *eating fleſh*, and *drinking wine*, the clearn contrary: And what moved them? even the ſad condition they were in: *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall die.* Oh, why not rather, Let us mourn and humble our ſelves, for we ſhall die! But they are deſperate; They will take their pleaſures while they may, they know not how ſoon they may be deprived of them. Such as theſe are filled up with deſperate prophaneneſſe. That as *Saul* and his Armour-bearers did deſperately throw themſelves upon the Spear, to kill themſelves: Thus do theſe men laugh and drink, and will have their pleaſures, though they know death will deprive them of all. Such men are ſaid to *make a league with hell and the grave*; They will do well enough for all this. Or rather, they think they ſhall be damned; their conſcience ſecretly whiſpers that to them; therefore they will have their pleaſures while they can. O miſerable and wretched men, wo be to ſuch that ever they were born.

Fourthly, This prophane ſecurity differeth from ſpiritual confidence, *in reſpect of the Author and efficient cauſe*: For it's plain who giveth *David* this holy quietneſſe; it's *God that maketh him dwell confidently*; it's God that commands reſt

and eaſe to the ſoul; whereas this carnal ſecurity cometh wholly *from the Devil:* It's he that lulleth them aſleep. Our Saviour diſcovered this in that parable, when he ſaid, *While the ſtrong one kept the houſe, all things were in quiet.* You would wonder to ſee a man curſe and ſwear, and follow all the pleaſures of his heart; yet that he can lay himſelf to ſleep; that he ſhould not think his chamber would be as full of Devils, as *Pharaoh*'s was full of frogs: That he ſhould not cry out, Oh, I dare not ſleep, for fear this night the Devils fetch my ſoul to hell. Now all this carnal ſecurity in his ſpirit, ariſeth from the Devil, who is ſaid to *reign in the hearts of the children of diſobedience:* It's he that filleth the ſoul with ſpiritual madneſſe. As when he poſſeſſed the bodies of men, he threw them into the fire and water, and made them cut and launce their bodies, without any grief at all; the like he doth upon the ſouls of men, hurrying them into beaſtly, wicked, and ungodly waies; and by that meanes, even into hell it ſelf, as he did the Herd of Swine, when he entred into them, carrying them violently into the Sea. What was it that made *Judas* ſo deſperately betray innocent blood, though he had ſo much warning; ſo many admonitions to the contrary? Though ſome were ſtricken down with amazement, yet nothing will ſtop him; The Devil did drive him: The Devil had entred into his heart, even as he did alſo fill *Ananias* his heart. So that as you ſee it's with godly men, when filled with the holy Ghoſt, they would boldly confeſſe Chriſt, though they endured all torments for it: Thus when the Devil hath poſſeſſion of mens hearts, and the Lord leaveth them to his temptations, then they are mad and obſtinate; they ſcoff and mock at the Day of Judgment. As the Apoſtle *Peter* tels us of ſuch prophane mockers; *Where is the day of his coming? Are not all things as they were,* 2 Pet. 3. 4. Thus like *Leviathan*, they laugh at the Spear; and as the Prophets hearers, becauſe he ſo often preached the *burden of the Lord*, therefore they took it up by way of ſcoff; *The burden of the Lord, The burden of the Lord.* Thus do they about hell and damnation.

Fifthly, *Carnal ſecurity differeth from this heavenly confidence, in reſpect of the Concomitants and Companions.* For though *David* had this great quietneſſe of ſoul, knowing God would help him, yet he doth carefully uſe all the meanes God hath appointed: He doth not preſume or tempt God, but he *prayeth to God*, and flyeth for his ſafety, and getteth all the poſſible ſuccour he can. So in that grand aſſurance and confidence which the people of God have about their eternal happineſſe, there is alſo an holy fear and trembling. Therefore the Apoſtle exhorts to *work out their ſalvation with fear and trembling.* And *Paul* himſelf, who had ſo much confidence, as to ſay, *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of God in Chriſt?* yet he *kept under his body, leſt when he had preached to others, he himſelf ſhould become a reprobate,* 1 Cor. 9. 27. But as for the wicked careleſſe man, he promiſeth himſelf all happineſſe and future good, though he ſit ſtill, and ſtirre not a foot towards Heaven; yea, though he go in the contrary path, yet he flattereth himſelf, as if that were the way to happineſſe.

Uſe of Terrour and Wo, To all thoſe *Laiſh* and *Laodicean* ſpirits, who ſit at eaſe, and ſay, They are rich, and want nothing; when indeed, they are poor and miſerable, and want all things. Oh, turn your joy into ſorrow! Go out with *Ephraim*, and let God ſee you ſmite upon the breaſt, and ſtrike upon the thigh, crying out, Oh, what have I done! Oh, mad wretch that I am! merry and jolly, when in the Devils dungeon; when in the chains of darkneſſe; when upon the very borders of Hell? It may ſhortly be no more ſaid, ſuch an one is eating and drinking, but his body rotting in the Grave, and his ſoul roaring in Hell.

The Reaſon of the Saints Confidence, is, That God alone is their Preſerver. Shewing alſo the Waies and Meanes by which he doth Preſerve them.

PSAL. 4. 8.

For thou alone doeſt make me dwell in ſafety.

IN theſe words, we have a *Reaſon* why *David* hath ſuch confidence; it's not from any carnal and outward Motive, but *only from divine conſideration.* For in this alſo, might be ſhewed the *difference* between *carnal ſecurity*, and *holy quietneſſe*: The one, is a *fruit of a godly and diligent obedience to the Law of God*, and ſo is a fruit of the Promiſe: as *Prov.*3.23,24. You may ſee there a notable Promiſe for reſt, ſafety, and ſleep, to ſuch as follow *Wiſdomes* Advice. And *David* found God faithfull in his Word, *Pſal.* 127. *For ſo thou giveſt thy Beloved ſleep.* But all earthly ſecurity, ariſeth from ſome temporal hopes they look at in their dangers; and therefore while they look for peace, God makes calamity to ariſe on the ſuddain: as 1 *Theſ.* 5.3. *When they ſay peace and ſafety, then ſuddain deſtruction ſhall ariſe, as of a Woman with Child, and they ſhall not eſcape.* Suddainly, in the midſt of their mirth and jollity, will their inevitable deſtruction ariſe.

David therefore hath a more firm and immoveable Rock, and that is *Gods Power and Preſervation*: Which is expreſſed in

The Effect of it. And

The ſolitary Efficiency of it.

The *Effect* is, *To dwell in ſafety.* *David* though now in baniſhment, and had no Houſe of his own to lay his head in, yet is as confident, as if he had been at reſt in his dwelling place. But becauſe all that dwell, are not ſecure; eſpecially in times of violence and warre, therefore he addeth *ſafety.* Some tranſlate the word *in Spe*, in *Hope*; and ſo it may denote both the outward *condition*, and his inward *diſpoſition.*

Laſtly, Here is the *ſolitarineſſe* of this *Efficiency*, *It's God alone.* It's not *David's* own care, nor the aſſiſtance of others, but God alone: All the glory is to be aſcribed ſolely to him. Indeed, ſome relate the word to *David*, as if *David* though alone, God made him dwell in ſafety: He can keep one man ſecurely, in the midſt of all enemies. Thus God promiſeth to *Iſrael*, *Deut.*33.28. *Iſrael ſhall dwell in ſafety alone.* But we rather take it as attributed to God: And thence Obſerve,

That it is God alone, who doth preſerve in ſafety.

God alone preſerveth in ſafety.

Did he withdraw his protection, every ſtone in the ſtreet, every tile on the Houſe, might be an Executioner. If we conſider how many waies man is ſubject to death and dangers, we muſt acknowledge it even a Miracle, that we riſe ſafe, and go to bed in ſafety. It's good to ſuggeſt this truth to you; for who is there that doth acknowledge God in theſe common mercies? That bleſſeth God

for

for preſerving him daily in his *wits*, in his *ſenſes*, in *bodily health* and dangers? For although theſe be bodily mercies, and we delight in them as ſuch, yet we do not look up to God the Giver of them; whereas that Petition, *Give us this day our daily Bread*, doth not only extend to nouriſhment, but Protection alſo. It's God giveth every crum of Bread: It's God giveth thee breath, every time thou breatheſt. The Pſalmiſt (*Pſal.* 127.1,2.) doth extend this ſafety, not only to particular perſons, but *Families*, and *Nations*, and *Cities*: All care in a *Family*, all military power in a *City* is in vain, if God doth not guard it. Thus *Solomon* ſheweth, that it is not any outward thing in the world that can defend a man, even thoſe things that we are moſt apt to truſt in, *Prov.* 21.31. compared with *Pſal.* 33,17.

To open this Doctrine, conſider theſe Particulars.

I. Firſt, That the Hebrew word that was hinted before, doth denote *two things*.

1. *An inward diſpoſition of hope and undaunted courage.*

2. *External ſafety and quietneſſe*: For theſe two are ſeparable. God may keep a man in a quiet couragious hopefull diſpoſition, even when dangers do inviron round about; as it was with *David* in the former Pſalm: *Though ten thouſand ſhould compaſſe him about, he would not be afraid.* Yea, in this, he ſaith in another place, he would be confident. And certainly, herein God is much to be prailed, that he keeps the heart from feares, and the underſtanding and ſenſes, in their regular operations. How eaſily can God make a man a *Cain*, a *Magor-Miſſabib*? it's a curſe that God threatens the wicked *Iſraelites* with, *Deut.* 28. 66. Such a curſed miſerable life every man might live. And ſo for our underſtanding and ſenſes, and imagination, who is it that preſerveth thee? What a wofull, dreadfull thing is it, to have the fantaſie diſturbed? Some think that wonderfull work upon *Nebuchadnezar*, that God ſtruck him into, was only a *melancholy* diſturbance of his fantaſie. It's ſaid, *The wicked fleeth, when no man purſueth*; (Prov. 21.1.) *and he feareth, where no fear is.* Now thus, God might deliver thee up to a deluded imagination, to a terrible fantaſie; he might deprive thee of ſenſes and underſtanding; or thou mightſt go up and down, with a fearfull ſpirit, which ſhall impetuouſly and tyrannically diſquiet thee: ſo that in no outward danger, yet thou ſhalt create danger to thy ſelf. But God giveth this inward confidence.

2. There is *external ſafety*; a condition of freedom and quietneſſe, which is alſo Gods gift only.

II. God preſerveth principally. Secondly, *God preſerveth thus in ſafety Principally, and appointeth his creatures Inſtrumentally.*

Principally: Therefore he is called *the Lord of Hoſts*, as having ſupream dominion over all creatures, to uſe them as Inſtruments, either of vengeance or mercy. Hence he is called in *Job*, *The Preſerver of men*, *Job.* 7.20. No creature, though wiſe and ſtrong; yea, though working as natural Agents, can put forth their ſtrength for our preſervation, unleſſe the true Word of God, which giveth a command to their being, give alſo a command to their operation. So that it's God, who by men or other creatures, doth preſerve, nouriſh, and comfort thee. *Jacob's* Ladder, *reaching up to Heaven*, is ſaid to repreſent the Providence of God, whereby he works in the governing of all things, through Inſtruments.

And by creatures inſtrumentally. 1. Irrational. Now the *Inſtruments* whereby God doth preſerve his in ſafty, are ſometimes the *Irrational creatures*, ſometimes the *Rational*.

By a *Raven*, which is the moſt greedy and devouring Bird, yet God preſerved the life of *Elijah*. And it's a remarkeable Hiſtory of a godly Martyr, who having hid himſelf in a hole of the houſe for ſafety, immediately a Spider made a large web over the hole; ſo that when the Purſuers came to enquire after him, and

and one of them moved to ſearch in that hold, No; ſaith the other, none hath gone in their lately, you may ſee by the cob-webs: And thus that holy man eſcaped their fury.

2. Rationall men.

2. By *Rational* creatures: Thus God ſtirreth up many to preſerve thoſe that are appointed to die. *Eſther* was a meanes to ſave her whole Nation, the *people* to preſerve *Jonathan*. For as God in juſt and wiſe Providences doth raiſe up many times one man to be the deſtruction of another: Which made *Habbakuk* complain, *Wo Lord, haſt thou made man to be like the fiſhes of the Sea, the greater to devoure the leſſe?* So on the other ſide, he doth in great mercy, raiſe up ſome men to be a ſafeguard to others. Thus *Obadiah* hid many Prophets, by fifty in a Cave, from *Jezabels* fury.

Angels.

As men ſo *Angels are notably uſed by God for the preſervation of his people.* Inſomuch, that ſome godly men have greatly blamed Chriſtians, that they are no more thankfull to God for thoſe Guardes he hath appointed them. Not that we are to pray unto Angels, or that there is a peculiar Tutelar Angel vouchſafed to every man; though not only the Papiſts, but even ſome of the Antients, and of later Orthodox Divines, have been of that Opinion, though abhorring all Angel-worſhip. Not (I ſay) to determine that; yet in the generall it's plain, that the Scripture makes the Angels to be *our helps and defenders.* Inſomuch, that by them as Inſtruments, we are preſerved from thoſe falls and dangers which otherwiſe would come upon us. *Pſal.* 91. 11. God is there ſaid *to give his Angels charge over us.* Yea, *They ſhall bear thee up in their hands, as a tender Nurſe beareth a young Child*; that the godly do not ſo much as daſh a foot againſt the ſtone. Here you ſee the Inſtrumental ſerviceableneſſe which is vouchſafed to the godly by Angels. And ſo you have a full place to this purpoſe, *Pſal.* 34. 7. *The Angel of the Lord encampeth about thoſe that fear him.* Oh, how many preſervations, how many Providences do we conſtantly receive, and never take any notice of!

III.

Thirdly, Gods Providential Preſervation is two-fold; either *General*, which extends to all creatures, or *ſpecial* and *Particular*, that reacheth in a peculiar manner to the godly.

The *general* Preſervation, is in reſpect, even of Beaſts themſelves. Therefore *Pſal.* 36 6. *David* takes notice of Gods hand, that *preſerveth man and beaſt.* Hence (*Mat* 6.) *A ſparrow* (ſo inconſiderable a Bird, yet) *doth not fall to the ground, without Providence.* It hath indeed, been the Opinion of ſome, yea ſome Fathers; That the Providence of God doth not extend to minute and particular things: But the Scripture is clear in this. So that the leaſt fly cannot move it ſelf, or the worm creep, without Gods Providence. It's God then, that preſerveth the irrational creatures, and that without any derogation to his Majeſty; for he cannot but do it, becauſe of his ſupream Perfection.

But then for the *Preſervation of man*, eſpecially of *Believers*; there his care is more ſingular and peculiar. In this ſenſe ſome expound that place, *The Saviour of all men, eſpecially thoſe that believe*, 1 Tim. 4. 10. Gods care to his people, is notably diſcovered by our Saviours expreſſion, *Luk.* 21. 18. where he ſaith, *Not one hair of our head ſhall fall to the ground*: Compared with *Mat.* 10. 30. *The very hairs are numbered.* So then, the leaſt danger cannot befall us, without the Providence of our heavenly *Father.*

IIII.

Fourthly, *Hence it is that all the dangers, yea and death it ſelf, comes by Gods appointment*: No ſooner or later, nor no other waies then he hath decreed. Thus *David* comforted himſelf, that though his enemies plotted againſt him, yet *his times were in Gods hand*; and to God *do belong the iſſues of death*, Pſal. 68. 20. So that it lyeth not in the power of all thy enemies, to kill thee when they will. *David* did often acknowledge this, That it was God, who did preſerve him in all his trouble. For you muſt know, that this is a truth in Divinity, howſoever

Arminians

Arminians and others, have arraigned it for falſe-hood; *That God hath ſet the term of a mans life immoveable, beyond which he cannot live, and to which he ſhall attain*: As alſo, *All the means bringing it about*; Even thoſe things that ſeem to be the moſt caſual and accidental. *Job* ſpeaks this truth evidently, Chap. 14. 5. God had *appointed his moneths, and his daies, ſo that he cannot paſſe the bounds.* Yet this is not to be underſtood, as if hereby a fatal neceſſity were introduced, that if he be ſick, he need not uſe Phyſick to prolong life. Not upon that ground which the Stoick ſaid, *Si fatale eſt ut convaleſcat, fatale etiam eſt ut medicum adhibeat*: If it be the deſtiny to be well, it will be the deſtiny to call for the Phyſician; but becauſe *Gods Decree doth include in it the meanes.* So that we muſt ſay, *God hath appointed in the uſe of meanes, to prolong ſuch a mans life*, viz. *Hezekiah's nineteen yeers* longer. It's true, the Scripture ſaith, *The Wicked ſhall not live out half their daies*; but that is in reſpect of their hopes and expectations, as alſo in reſpect of the ordinary courſe of nature. Many men by their wickedneſſe do ſhorten their daies, in reſpect of ſecond cauſes. Therefore do not ſinfully fear this or that will kill thee, for thy times are in Gods hand, and he hath appointed the *period* of any godly mans life in much mercy, becauſe they have done their work; and to preſerve them from great evils to come.

The ſeveral waies by which God preſerveth his people in ſafety.

Theſe things premiſed, let us conſider *the ſeveral Waies by which God preſerveth his people in ſafety.*

And one remarkeable way, is, *By reſtraining and keeping them from ſuch counſels or actions that may bring death and danger.* Do we not ſee raſhneſſe, eſpecially drunkenneſſe and other vices, which make men bold, are the cauſe of many a mans death? God therefore keeps his people in a ſober and wel-adviſed way. Why is it ſaid, *That Wicked men ſhall not live out half their daies*, but that the ungodlineſſe of men doth bring them to untimely deaths? Yea, we read of that good King *Joſiah*, whoſe death was ſo much lamented, that he brought it upon him by raſhneſſe, and fooliſh temerity; for he would unneceſſarily go and fight with *Pharaoh* King of *Necho*; and though he was ſo ſeriouſly adviſed to the contrary, yet he would adventure to his ruine, 2 *Chron.* 35. *David* himſelf, by his own unbelief and ſinne, did bring himſelf into danger. And in the matter of *Achiſh*, when he was forced to feign himſelf mad; but alwaies while he was in Gods way, every thing proſpered with him. Therefore Gods mercy is eſpecially ſeen to the godly, in that he makes them *keep within their calling and bounds*; and that is a ſafe way. If you obſerve, you ſhall find the greateſt dangers befall men out of their Calling. They go beyond their bounds, and then they ſmart for it. The Bird is ſafeſt, while ſhe is on her Neſt. Therefore when the Devil tempted our Saviour to throw himſelf down the Pinacle of the Temple, he anſwered, *Thou ſhalt not tempt God, Mat.* 4 7. The Devil left out that paſſage, *Thou wilt keep him in all his Waies.* A man muſt be in his Calling, and doing his duty. It's true indeed, God for wiſe and juſt ends, may bring ſuddain exerciſes upon his own people, while doing their duty: And God doth not alwaies keep them in ſafety; violent death, and other dangers have befallen them as well as the wicked; but even then God doth order thoſe paſſages for their good.

Secondly, *God preſerveth them from thoſe caſual and accidental evils, Which ariſe ſo unexpectedly, that no mans Wiſdome can prevent them.* God hath the ſupreme ordering and governing of all things; even thoſe things that we judge the greateſt caſualty and chance, they are wiſely determined by God. In that paſſage where a man is ſuppoſed to be cutting of a tree with an Axe, and the helve fall of, and kill a man, that accident is ſaid to come from God, and he is ſaid to give ſuch a man into his hand, *Exod.* 21. 13 compared with *Deut.* 19 5. Now conſider how many thouſand caſualties happen in the world, of killing of men, of Houſes and Towns burnt: and herein we muſt acknowledg the goodneſſe of God to us; for that which hath befallen another, might as well befall thee, but that God prevents it.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *God preserveth Wonderfully, in changing and altering, or Working upon the hearts of men; so that though otherwise they would, yet God so binds up their hearts, that they shall not do thee any mischief.* Did not *Saul* for many years together, study to take away *David's* life, yet he could not do it? Was not *Esau* also purposed to kill *Jacob*, yet God wholly changed his heart, and that when he had a fair opportunity? And how remarkeable is that passage of *Jehoshaphat*, who when in the Battell was taken by his enemies, and they ready to kill him, yet he *cryed unto the Lord, and God moved their heart to depart from him*, 2 Chron. 18. 31. So in the *thievings* and *robberies* in the world, it's God that diverts men from designing and doing mischief to such Families. While the people of *Israel* went up to keep their Feast at *Jerusalem*, he ordered mens hearts so, *That none should desire their Land*, Exo 34.24.

Use of Thankfulnesse to God in all these common Preservations: Every day, every morning and evening, thou hast cause to wonder at his Power and Goodnesse under all thy temptations: What befalls another, God tells thee, what might come to thee. Oh, therefore do not take thy life and health God giveth thee, and spend it upon the Devils service! Remember, Thou livest upon Gods mercy, if he withdraw for a moment, any suddain evil may fall upon thee.

* * *

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